



THE
H I S T O R Y
OF
ANCIENT GREECE,
ITS COLONIES, AND CONQUESTS;

From the Earliest Accounts till the
Division of the Macedonian Empire in the East.

INCLUDING THE HISTORY OF
LITERATURE, PHILOSOPHY, AND THE FINE ARTS.

By JOHN GILLIES, LL. D. F.A.S.

Εκ μὲν τοιγὲ τῆς ἀπάντων πρὸς ἀλλήλα συμπλοκῆς καὶ παραθεσῆως,
ἐπεὶ δὲ ὁμοιοτήτος καὶ διαφορᾶς, μόνως ἀντὶς ἐφίκοιτο καὶ δυνήθει
κατοπτρῶσαι, ἅμα καὶ τὸ χρησιμὸν καὶ τὸ τέχνηον ἐκ τῆς ἱστορίας
λαβεῖν.

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OF THE

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E R R A T A.

Page 3, line 25, for Harpalus, read Harpagus.
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THE HISTORY OF GREECE.

CHAP. XI.

Military Glory of Greece.—Enemies to whom that Country was exposed.—Foundation and Growth of Carthage.—The flourishing Condition of Magna Græcia—Excites the Jealousy of the Carthaginians—Who enter into a League with Xerxes.—The Object of this Alliance.—Causes of the singular Prosperity of Magna Græcia.—History of Pythagoras, and of his Philosophy.—The Carthaginians invade Sicily.—Their Disasters.—Glory of Gelon.—His Treaty with the Carthaginians.—Causes of the Decay of Magna Græcia.

THE beginning of the fifth century before
Christ forms the most glorious æra in the
history of Greece. While the republics
of Athens and Sparta humbled the pride of Asia,
the flourishing settlements on the Hellespont and
the

CHAP.
XI.
State of
Greece.
Olymp.
lxxv. 1.
A. C. 480.

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the Hadriatic overawed the fierce Barbarians of Europe¹; and the southern colony of Cyrené restrained, within their native limits, the savage ferocity of the Libyans². The north, south, and east thus acknowledging the ascendant of the Grecian valour and genius, Rome still contended in the west, with the obstinacy of the Volsci³, for the rude villages of Latium: yet on this side, from which the stream of conquest was destined, in a future age, to flow over the world, the Greeks had already most danger to apprehend, and most laurels to acquire; not, however, from Rome, but from the implacable⁴ enemy of the Roman name.

The foundation and growth of Carthage,

The foundation and growth of Carthage, which have been so successfully adorned by poetical fiction, are very imperfectly explained in history. It is known, that at least eight hundred and ninety years⁵ before the Christian æra, a Phœnician colony settled on that fertile projecture of the African coast, which boldly advances into the Mediterranean, to meet, as it were, and to defy the shores of Sicily and Italy, planted in the following century by

¹ Herodot. l. vi. Thucyd. l. i.

² Strabo, l. xvii.

³ Diodor. l. xi.

⁴ With what energy does Virgil express the eternal enmity between Rome and Carthage?

Littora littoribus contraria, fluctibus undas,

Imprecor, arma armis; pugnent ipsique nepotes. *Æneid.* l. iv.

⁵ B. C. 891. Petav. *de Doctr. Temporum*. Yet, as there is a gap in the Carthaginian history of several centuries, every man of taste will be desirous of extending the duration of this dark and unknown period, to have the pleasure of believing that *Æneas* and *Dido* were contemporaries: an opinion more probable than that of Sir Isaac Newton, who would bring down the time of *Æneas* and the æra of the Trojan war to the age of *Dido* and the foundation of Carthage.

Greeks,

Greeks, with whom the republic of Carthage, long before the age of her great Hannibal, waged many cruel and bloody wars. For three centuries after their establishment, the Carthaginians seem to have silently but successfully availed themselves of the natural fertility of their soil, the conveniency of their harbours, the skill and dexterity of their artificers, the adventurous spirit of their mariners; above all, of the profound wisdom of their government, which had been established on such admirable principles, that, from the foundation of their city till the age of the philosopher Aristotle⁶, no tyrant had oppressed the freedom, no sedition had disturbed the tranquillity of Carthage⁷.

From this peaceful and happy obscurity the Carthaginians first emerged into notice in consequence of their opposition to the naval enterprises of the Asiatic Greeks, who, about the middle of the sixth century before Christ, flying the oppressive domination of Persia, threw themselves on the western shores and islands of the Mediterranean. As a maritime and enterprising nation the Greeks were naturally the rivals of the Carthaginians; and the Phocæans, who had left the coast of Ionia to avoid the cruel tyranny of the satrap Harpalus, had landed

which opposes the naval enterprises of the Greeks.

⁶ Aristot. de Repub. l. ii. c. xi.

⁷ If Dido laid the foundation of so much prosperity and happiness, she might boast, with becoming dignity, of having secured immortal fame:

Vixi, & quem dederat cursum fortuna peregi,
Urbem præclaram statui, mea mœnia vidi:
Et nunc magna mei sub terris ibit imago. VIRGIL, *ibid.*

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at, or perhaps founded, Aleria in the isle of Corsica, before they finally settled at Velia⁸ in Italy, and Marseilles in Gaul⁹. The Carthaginians, who had already formed establishments in Corsica, regarded the whole island as a dependency of their republic, and set themselves to oppose with vigour the Grecian invaders. From a similar motive the Tuscans embraced the same design; and the most ancient naval engagement, distinctly recorded in history, was fought in the Sardinian sea, between the Phocæans with sixty sail on the one side, against the Tuscans and Carthaginians with double that number on the other¹⁰. The Greeks had the whole glory of the battle; they destroyed forty of the enemy's ships, and compelled the rest to fly.

Hinders
them from
settling in
Corsica.

But the smallness of their numbers, greatly diminished by their desperate efforts in defence of the honour of their nation against a superior force, obliged them to abandon the project of settling in Corsica.

Power and
splendour
of Car-
thage.
Olymp.
lxx. I.
A. C. 500.

Though the issue of this memorable sea-fight tends to dispel the cloud of fiction concerning the remote voyages and ancient naval power of the Carthaginians, yet it cannot be doubted, that in the beginning of the following century, and before the invasion of Xerxes, they were the most powerful commercial nation in the world. The proud centre of their empire was surrounded by a cluster of colonies and tributary cities, which extended

⁸ Diodor. l. v. and Cluverius Sicil. Ant. p. 507.

⁹ Thucydid. l. i.

¹⁰ Id. ibid. & Herodot. l. vi.

above a thousand miles ¹¹ along the coast of Africa. They were masters of Sardinia and the northern coast of Sicily ¹². They had established colonies not only in Corsica, but in Malta and the Balearian isles. They often visited the Casseterides. They probably first discovered the Canaries, whose equable and happy temperature entitled them to the epithet of Fortunate. They had appropriated the gold mines of Spain, the Peru and Mexico of the ancient world ¹³; and all these advantages being directed by the prudent enterprise of the magistrates, consisting chiefly of merchants ¹⁴, and improved by the patient industry

¹¹ From the western boundary of Cyrenaica to the Straits of Gibraltar, Shaw reckons 1420 geographical miles; but this was the extent of the Carthaginian dominion in the greatest splendour of the republic. SHAW'S Travels, p. 150.

¹² Polyb. l. iii. c. xxii.

¹³ Auctor, apud Hendreich Respub. Carthag. l. i.

¹⁴ In this respect the government of Carthage was very different from that of Crete, and particularly of Sparta, with both which Aristotle compares it. Isocrates (ad Nicoclem) says, that in civil affairs the Carthaginian government was aristocratical; in military, royal: this probably was the case in the earliest times. The chief magistrates were called Suffetes, which, in the Hebrew language, signifies judges (Bochart, Canaan), and might therefore be naturally translated by the word βασιλεῖς, in Greek. But it appears from Aristotle, that these judges or kings, who were two in number, were nothing more than annual magistrates, who convoked the senate, and presided in that assembly. When the senate and the suffetes were of one mind, the people had no vote in the management of public affairs; but when their opinions were different, it belonged to the people to decide. Aristotle regards this as an imperfection in their constitution; and time justified his opinion. In a commercial republic, where the people gradually become more rich and more licentious, such a regulation naturally tended to throw too much power into their hands. During the century which elapsed from Aristotle to Hannibal, the people of Carthage became more powerful than the senate; at Rome

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dustry of the people, who knew that by gaining wealth they must attain respect, rendered Carthage the centre of general commerce. From Egypt they imported linen and the papyrus; the coasts of the Red Sea furnished them with spices, perfumes, gold, pearls, and precious stones ¹⁵. The rich carpets of Persia adorned the palaces of the Carthaginian magistrates. From Spain they drew the precious metals necessary to facilitate their commerce; and from Britain and other provinces of the north they derived iron, lead, tin, and copper, equally necessary to second all the efforts of their industry. The Carthaginian exports consisted partly in the produce of their fertile soil, but chiefly in the ingenious labours of their artificers; grains, fruits, honey, leather, and flax of a superior kind ¹⁶; naval stores, particularly ropes made of a species of broom called spartum; household furniture, toys, and the materials of the highly valued *Punicean* colour. Their mechanic arts had attained a degree of perfection which was acknowledged and admired by their enemies ¹⁷; but the liberal arts, and particularly poetry and eloquence ¹⁸, seem never

to

the senate were more powerful than the people: and to these circumstances chiefly, the most judicious author of antiquity ascribes the very different fortune of the two nations in the ever memorable wars waged between them. POLYB. l. vi.

¹⁵ Pliny, l. xxxviii. c. vii. tells us, that carbuncles were so common in Carthage, that they were generally known by the name of Carthaginian.

¹⁶ Xenophon, de Venatione.

¹⁷ Cato de Re Rustica, & Valerius Maximus, l. vii.

¹⁸ The great Hannibal was a lover of Greek learning, and composed several books in that language. Cornelius Nepos in Hannibal, Silenus,

to have flourished or taken root in their republic; a circumstance more fatal to the renown of Carthage than all the destructive ravages of the Romans, whose immortal hate would have found it more difficult to abolish the elegant inventions of genius, than to extinguish the most splendid monuments of wealth and grandeur.

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Few individuals are able to enjoy, without abusing, the gifts of fortune; and no nation ever possessed power, without aspiring at conquest. But the commercial ambition of the Carthaginians was distinguished by an exclusive and jealous spirit, which sought to stifle the activity and improvements of every people that might ever become their rival. In the end of the sixth century before Christ, and twenty-eight years before the invasion of Xerxes, they concluded a treaty with Rome, recently delivered from the tyranny of its kings, which marks the utmost solicitude to prevent the new republic from ever entering into correspondence, or ever gaining acquaintance ¹⁹ with the dependencies of Carthage. The Greek colonies in Italy and Sicily, which, within the course of sixty years, had (for reasons that will immediately be explained) received

The ambitious and jealous spirit of that republic.

The prosperity of Greece alarms the Carthaginians,

Silenus, another Carthaginian, wrote history in Greek. Cicer. de Divinat. Sallust speaks of *Punic books* in his history of the Jugurthine war; and we know that Mago's Treatise of Rural Oeconomy, in 28 books, was translated by order of the Roman senate, although the elder Cato had previously handled that important subject. I mention not the spurious voyage of Hanno, since better proofs of the Carthaginian literature may be found in the second and eighteenth books of Pliny. But two observations naturally present themselves, which justify what is said in the text; first, that the Carthaginians wrote rather on the useful than ornamental arts; and secondly, that their greatest writers preferred the Greek to the Punic language.

¹⁹ Polyb. l. iii. c. xxii.

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such accessions of strength and splendour, as entitled those countries to the appellation of Magna Græcia²⁰, more justly alarmed the jealousy, and provoked the envious resentment of the Carthaginian magistrates. The Greeks were already masters of the eastern isles and shores of the Mediterranean. They were not only a warlike, but an ingenious and commercial nation. The naval force of the Phocæans alone had defied and disgraced the united fleets of the Tuscans and Carthaginians. The latter therefore beheld, with the utmost satisfaction, the continual sparks of hostility that broke out between the Greeks and Persians. They learned, with admiration and delight, the mighty preparations of Xerxes; but were still more delighted when the great king, who had been accustomed to receive the presents and the adulation of the tributary princes of Asia, condescended to demand an equal alliance with their republic; probably granted them subsidies to raise troops in Spain, Gaul, and the northern parts of Italy; and only required them to join their efforts with his own, to punish, and, if possible, to extirpate the natural enemies of both. The crafty Africans greedily accepted propositions, seemingly so favourable to their interest; and, after three years preparations, had collected an armament of two thousand ships of war, and three thousand transports, to convey an army of three hundred thousand men into Magna Græcia²¹. It was determined between the confederates, that while Xerxes poured his millions into the centre of Greece,

who enter
into an al-
liance with
Xerxes.

²⁰ Strabo, l. viii. p. 389.

²¹ Herodot. l. vii. & Diodor. l. xi.

and

and rooted out the original flock of the devoted nation, the Carthaginians should cut off its flourishing branches in Italy and Sicily. The terms of the agreement were carefully observed; the combined attack was made at the time appointed; and Europe is interested in knowing to what particular causes must be ascribed the failure of expeditions, which, if successful, would probably have inverted her destiny, and deprived her of the boasted superiority which she thenceforth maintained over the other quarters of the world.

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XI.

Their
views in
adopting
this mea-
sure.

Whoever has observed the desolate barbarity of Calabria, or reflected on the narrow extent and present weakness of Sicily, cannot hear, without a mixture of surprise and incredulity, that five centuries before Christ, those countries contained above twenty warlike communities, several of whom could send into the field an hundred thousand fighting men. The hasty glance of impatient ignorance will confidently reject, on this subject, the evidence of antiquity, as contrary to probability and experience; the contemplative visionary will admit the fact, and deduce from it many gloomy reflections on the old age and decay of the world; but the more practical philosopher will attempt to discover the causes of the ancient and actual state of Magna Græcia, in the history and institutions of that country during the respective periods of time which are the objects of his research.

The flour-
ishing
condition
of Magna
Græcia.

The establishment of Eubœan Cumæ, the mother of Parthenopé, or Naples, and the foundation of a few other Grecian cities in Italy and Sicily, remounts,

History of
the colo-
nization of
that coun-
try.

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XI.

remounts, as already mentioned, to the heroic ages ; but by far the greater number of Greek colonies in those parts were planted during the eighth century before the Christian æra ²², and chiefly, 1. by the Eubœans, whose principal city, Chalcis, usually furnishing the conductor of the colony, gave the epithet of Chalcidian to the new settlements ; 2. by the Achæans of Peloponnesus, who were of the Eolian tongue and lineage ; and, 3. by the Dorian states of that peninsula, especially Corinth ; to which city may be applied the observation of ancient republicans concerning the fathers of Cato and Brutus, that as children often derived lustre from the merit of their parents, so Corinth acquired renown from the splendour and prosperity of its children. Besides their powerful colonies in Corcyra, Leucas, Anactorium, Ambracia, whose transactions form such an important part of the history of ancient Greece, the Corinthians founded Syracuse, which soon became, and long continued, the capital of Sicily. Seventy years after their establishment there, the inhabitants of Syracuse built Acras, and afterwards, at an equal distance of time, Camerina. Many other cities of less note owed their birth to the same metropolis ; so that in the sixth century before Christ, the Syracusans had extended their settlements over all the southern coast of the island ²³. We had

The Dorian colonies most powerful in Sicily. Olymp. xi. 2. A.C. 729.

²² Between the 10th and 30th Olympiads, and the years 737 and 777 B. C.

²³ Scymnus, v. 293. Thucyd. l. vi. & Herodot. l. vii.

already

already an opportunity to mention on what occasion the Lacedæmonians founded the city of Tarentum in Italy; thirty-nine years afterwards, Rhegium was built by the Messenians and Chalcidians, the former of whom (as we have related above) had already settled at Messene, on the opposite shore of Sicily. The citizens of Tarentum founded Heraclea, situated on the Tarentine gulph, and perhaps gave an accession of inhabitants to Locri, which, though originally planted by the Eolians, seems early to have used the Doric dialect. The Rhodians, who were also of the Doric race, built the city of Gela in Sicily, forty-five years after the foundation of Syracuse²⁴; and Gela planted the flourishing colony of Agrigentum, which soon surpassed the splendour of its metropolis, and became the second city in the island.

CHAP.
XI.

Olymp.
viii. 2.
A.C. 707.

Olymp.
xlix. 3.
A.C. 582.

By means of these powerful establishments, the *Dorians* acquired, and always maintained, an ascendancy in Sicily; but the Achæan colonies, who were of the *Eolian* blood and language²⁵, commanded the Italian shore. Crotona, the most considerable city of the Achæans, and of all Italy in ancient times, was built seven hundred and ten years before Christ²⁶. Sybaris, its rival, was founded about the same time, and by the same nation. The former sent colonies to Tirina, Cau-

The Eolian, in Italy.

²⁴ Thucyd. l. vi.

²⁵ Strabo, l. viii. p. 513. assures us of the latter circumstance, which is of more importance than the uncertain genealogy of the ancient Grecian tribes.

²⁶ Dionys. Halicarn. l. ii.

lonia,

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The Ionian the weakest in both countries.

lonia, and Pandosia; the latter built Laus, Metapontum, and Posidonia, or Pæstum²⁷, whose admired ruins attest the ancient wealth and grandeur of the Greek cities of Italy.

In this deduction, had we followed the order of time, we ought to have mentioned, first of all, the Ionian colonies, who came from the isle of Eubœa. The inhabitants of that island built Naxos in Sicily, a year before the foundation of Syracuse²⁸; but neither that, nor their settlements at Catana, Egesta, Leontium, ever attained considerable populousness or splendour. And it deserves to be particularly remarked, that, for reasons which will appear in the sequel of this work, the Ionians, who settled chiefly near the eastern shore of Sicily, never rivalled the power and fame of their Dorian and Eolian neighbours, but fell short of those nations in Magna Græcia, as much as they surpassed them in the shores and islands of Asia.

General causes of the wealth and populousness of all these colonies.

Instead of fatiguing the memory of our readers with the names of less considerable states or cities, which had little influence on the general affairs of the whole country²⁹, it is of more importance to

²⁷ Scymnus, v. 245.

²⁸ Thucyd. l. vi.

²⁹ The Magna Græcia, which I always use in the sense of Strabo, cited above, to denote the Greek settlements in Sicily as well as Italy, being the most accessible part of the Grecian dominions, has been more fully described by the moderns than any other. The immense collection of the Thesaurus Siculus, and particularly vols. i. iv. vii. viii. and xiii. afford useful materials, as well as Cluverii Sicil. Antiqua, and Fazellus de Rebus Siculis, and the excellent work of Gio. Balt. Caruso, Memorie istoriche di quanto e accaduto in Sicilia dal tempo de' suoi primi abitanti fino ai Normanni.

examine the circumstances to which the inhabitants of Magna Græcia owed their flourishing situation at the period of time of which we write, when (it may be boldly affirmed) these colonies equalled, and exceeded, the wealth and power of the mother-country. We shall not insist on the well-known physical and moral causes which usually contribute to the rapid growth of newly-established colonies. It is evident, that amidst the equality of fortune, and simplicity of manners, which commonly prevail in such communities, men who have a wide country before them must naturally multiply far beyond the proportion of nations corrupted and weakened by the vices of wealth, luxury, and above all, of vanity, which perhaps is the greatest enemy to the increase of the human species. It is sufficient barely to mention the natural fertility of Magna Græcia, and particularly of Sicily, which in many places produced an hundred fold³⁰. The Greeks who sailed thither from Peloponnesus, carried with them the knowledge and practice of agriculture, which had early attained an high degree of perfection in their peninsula; and the exuberant soil of Sicily, improved by cultivation, soon exhibited a picture of that rich abundance, which, in later times, made that beautiful island be entitled the granary of Rome³¹.

The peculiar situation of the Achæans and Dorians, from whom, chiefly, the colonies in Magna Græcia derived their origin, had a considerable

C H A P.
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Olymp.
lxx. 1.
A. C. 500.

Particular
causes.
The A-
chæan
laws.

³⁰ Strabo, l. viii.

³¹ Diodorus, l. xvi.

influence

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influence in accelerating the population and grandeur of these new establishments. The Achæans, whose republic became so famous in later times, and that in consequence of circumstances which it is necessary at present to describe, originally inhabited a long, but narrow strip of ground, not more fertile than extensive, along the Corinthian gulph, whose rocky shores were destitute of good harbours³². But the impartial and generous spirit of the Achæan laws early compensated the natural defects of their territory. They were the first, and long the only republic of Greece, who admitted strangers into their community on equal terms with the ancient citizens³³. In *their* truly free country, no powerful capital, like Thebes in Bœotia, or Athens in Attica, domineered over the inferior towns and villages. Twelve cities, which had common laws and institutions, and afterwards common weights and measures³⁴, sent deputies to Helicé, which is distinguished by Homer³⁵ as the most considerable town of Achaia. That place being destroyed by an earthquake³⁶ three hundred and seventy-three years before Christ, Ægæ became the seat of the general congress, which regulated public affairs, and appointed annual magi-

³² Plutarch, in Arato, p. 1031.

³³ Polybius, l. ii. p. 178.

³⁴ Polybius, *ibid.* mentions this circumstance, to shew how desirous they were to have every thing common and equal among them.

³⁵ Il. ii. in the catalogue.

³⁶ Strabo, l. viii. p. 589. says, the earthquake happened two years before the battle of Leuctia, which was fought 371 years before Christ.

strates and generals to execute their resolutions, who were accountable to the congress, or council, as the members of the council themselves were to the cities by which they had been named and constituted³⁷. This excellent system of government, which checked the ambition, while it maintained the independence of Achaia³⁸, defended that fortunate country against the convulsions which shook and overwhelmed the most powerful republics of Greece. It was then 'that the Achæans, who during many ages had enjoyed their equitable laws in silence, emerged from obscurity; and communicating their government on equal terms to the neighbouring cities of Peloponnesus, preserved the feeble spark of liberty, every where extinguished around them, for one hundred and thirty-six years, till they finally yielded to the power and policy of Rome³⁹. This short period of war and tumult has been minutely described in history, while the many happy centuries that preceded it are but occasionally glanced at by ancient writers: and were it not for the defeats and calamities which the Achæans suffered in later times, we should, perhaps, be ignorant that their ancestors anciently possessed an equitable and generous policy, which being transported with them into Magna Græcia, could not fail to promote the happiness and prosperity of that delightful country⁴⁰.

A.C. 281.

The

³⁷ Polybius, l. ii. p. 178.

³⁸ Schook. Achaia, apud Gronov. Thef. t. v.

³⁹ Polyb. Excerpt. Legat. & Titus Livius, l. xxxviii. & xxxix.

⁴⁰ Xenophon, in his Greek history, speaks of the excellence of the Achæan laws, in treating a passage of history which will be related

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The state
of the Do-
rians at the
time of
their emi-
gration to
Magna
Græcia.

The condition of the Dorians, at the time when they planted colonies in Italy and Sicily, is not less worthy of remark. The Dorian states of Peloponnesus were then universally subject to the gentle government of limited but hereditary princes, or to magistrates chosen from the descendants of their ancient royal families ⁴¹, and who, thus adorned by birth, were sometimes still more ennobled by wisdom and virtue ⁴². It is the nature of colonies to preserve with affectionate respect the institutions of the mother-country, which often improve by transplantation, and thrive and flourish in foreign lands, when they have withered and perished in the soil which originally produced and propagated them. Time and accident, and the various causes which have been explained in the course of this history, tended to change the ancient constitution, and to diminish the strength of the Grecian states on both sides the Corinthian Isthmus. While fierce and frequent wars exhausted their population, the exclusive spirit of republican jealousy, which sternly refused strangers any participation in their government, or any

Cir-
cum-
stances fa-
vourable to
the new
settlers in
that coun-
try.

lated in the sequel. Polybius was evidently engaged to enter deeper into this subject, by the reason assigned in the text.

⁴¹ These were properly the only nobility in Greece; they were called *εὐπατριδαι*, and long held sway in all the Grecian states. S. Petitus has collected the most important passages concerning them in his commentary on the ancient Athenian law, "*Τὸ; εὐπατριδᾶς γινώσκειν τὰ θεία, καὶ παρεχεῖν ἀρχόντας, καὶ νόμων δ.δασκαλεῖς εἶναι, καὶ δίκην καὶ ἔργων ἐξηγῆται.*" "That the Eupatridæ, or nobility, administer the rites of religion, fill the offices of magistracy, interpret the laws, and explain all sacred and divine matters."

⁴² Thucyd. l. i.

protection

protection from their laws, naturally repressed their vigour and stunted their growth. The colonies in Magna Græcia, enjoying a wide territory before them, had not the same interference of interest, and found sufficient employment in subduing the original inhabitants of that country, without commencing hostilities against each other. Nor were they more ambitious to subdue the barbarous natives, than solicitous to incorporate them into their own communities. The kings, or nobility, of Magna Græcia, secure of their own pre-eminence, felt⁴³ nothing of the republican jealousies which prevailed in the mother-country. They received with pleasure new citizens, or rather subjects, from whatever quarter they might come. The Barbarians adopted the language and manners of the nation to whom they were associated; their children received a Grecian education; and the states of Italy and Sicily thus increasing by degrees, could soon boast, the former of Crotona, Tarentum, Sybaris, Rhegium; the latter of Syracuse, Agrigentum, Messene, Himera, and several other cities, which rivalled or surpassed the wealth of Athens or Corinth, and the populousness of Thebes, Argos, or Sparta.

The wars, conquests, or oppressions, but above all, the civil dissensions, which in the sixth century before Christ disturbed and deformed the coast of

The oppression of the Asiatic Greeks brought

⁴³ The same policy was practised by Macedon; and, as we shall have occasion to relate, was the primary cause of the Macedonian greatness.

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bitants to
Italy and
Sicily;who im-
proved
arts, and
corrupted
manners;

Ionian, and the other Grecian colonies in the islands and continent of Asia, brought frequent accessions of inhabitants to the shores of Magna Græcia. In that age the Asiatic Greeks had attained greater proficiency, both in the useful and in the agreeable arts, than any other portion of the Grecian name; but they had also sunk deeper in voluptuousness and luxury. Their poetry, which still remains, alike attests the refinement of their taste, and the corruption of their morals. The effeminate vices, for which the Ionians were thenceforth in all ages infamous⁴⁴, seem to have taken deep root in that century; and it is probable, that along with their poetry, music, and painting, they communicated also their dissolute and artificial appetites to the Greeks of Italy and Sicily.

But whether this be admitted, or whether we suppose that, according to the ordinary course of events, the inhabitants of Magna Græcia having attained opulence by industry, dissipated it in idleness and licentiousness, it is acknowledged by all writers on this part of history, that the Greek cities of Italy, and particularly Sybaris and Crotona, had degenerated from their ancient maxims, and fallen a prey to the most dangerous errors and vices, when Pythagoras came to their relief, about five hundred and fifty years before the Christian æra.

which are
reformed
by Pytha-
goras.

The philosophy of Pythagoras forms an important object in the history of the human mind:

44 *Motus doceri gaudet Ionicos*
Matura virgo, & fingitur artibus,
Jam nunc, & incestos amores
De tenero meditatur ungue.

HORACE.

I

and

and if we admit the concurring testimony of ancient authors ⁴⁵, the philosophy, or rather the legislation, of this extraordinary man, reformed and improved the manners and policy of Magna Græcia, and contributed in an eminent degree, not only to the quiet and happiness, but to the industry, power, and splendour, of that celebrated country. Lest this influence should appear too great, and even incredible, in a stranger, who is known to have studiously declined all public offices and authority, the occasion requires that we should explain the means by which such extraordinary effects were produced.

Pythagoras was born at Samos ⁴⁶, when Samos was the richest and most flourishing of all the Grecian isles. His father, Mnesarchus, being a person of distinction in his country ⁴⁷, the promising youth was carefully instructed in the learning known or valued in that early age. Music, poetry, and the gymnastic exercises, formed the principal part of his education; but the young philosopher, if we may anticipate that name, was not indifferent ⁴⁸

History of
that philo-
sopher.
Olymp.
xlv. 1.
A. C. 600.

His educa-
tion.

⁴⁵ Particularly Aristoxenus, the learned disciple of Aristotle (apud Stobæum, Serm. xli.); various ancient authors cited by Jamblicus and Porphyry, as well as by Diogenes Laertius, l. viii.; to which add Justin, l. xx. and Cicero, Tusc. Quæst. de Amicitia, & de Oratore. "Pythagoras exornavit eam Græciam quæ Magna dicta est, & privatim & publice, præstantissimis & institutis & artibus." Cicero de Amicitia.

⁴⁶ Isocrates in Busiri. Titus Livius, l. i. c. xviii. Lucian. Lexiphanes. To these authorities we may add, that Pythagoras is represented on several Samian coins. Fabric. Bibl. Græca, t. i. p. 455.

⁴⁷ Mnesarchus was sent from Samos to consult the oracle of Delphi, probably on some public occasion. Jamb. in Vit. Pythag.

⁴⁸ Apollon. apud Jamblichum.

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Travels.

to the discoveries of Thales, the first Grecian who nearly calculated an eclipse of the sun; and he early set himself to rival the Milesian sage in his favourite studies. It is recorded, that he learned eloquence from Pherecydes of Syros⁴⁹, who resided a considerable time in the isle of Samos, and who is famous in the literary history of Greece, as the first author in prose⁵⁰. Pittacus of Lesbos, Bias of Priéné, and the other sophists, or wise men (as they were emphatically styled by their contemporaries) who then flourished in Asiatic Greece, and whose abilities and virtue had raised them, in troubled times, to the head of the several communities of which they were respectively members, excited the kindred ambition of Pythagoras, who appears to have been early animated with the desire of acquiring just renown, by promoting public happiness. In his eighteenth year he visited the continent of Greece, and gained the prize of wrestling at the Olympic games⁵¹, where his vigour, address, and beauty, were beheld with admiration by the multitude; while the opening virtues of his mind were still more admired by men of sense and discernment. In conformity with the practice of an age when the feeble rays of knowledge were scattered over a wide surface, and much pains were requisite to collect them, he withdrew himself from the applauses of his countrymen, and for a longer time than was usual with the Grecian

⁴⁹ Diogenes apud Porph.

⁵⁰ Plin. N. H. l. vii. c. lvi.

⁵¹ Jambl. Porph. &c.

travellers. This circumstance gave occasion to many fables concerning the extent and variety of his voyages⁵². But it is certain that he resided

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⁵² The travels of the Greek philosopher were spoken of in vague terms, and magnified even by great writers. *Ultimas terras lustrâsse Pythagoram, Democritum, Platonem accepimus. Cicero de Finibus, l. iv. c. xix.* We may well believe then, that such men as Hermippus (apud Joseph. advers. Apionem), Apollonius, Jamblichus, &c. would carry their exaggerations to the highest degree of incredibility on this fertile subject. The chief source of these fables, and of the supposed learning of the Magi, Chaldeans, Indians, &c. may be found in the credulous or lying writers who accompanied Alexander in his eastern expedition. At their return to Greece, they magnified the learning, as well as the power and wealth, of the nations conquered by their patron; they were solicitous to persuade their countrymen, that their ancestors had learned their philosophy from people whose names they had never before heard; and their own vanity was flattered by having visited, and familiarly known those fancied instructors of mankind. Clearchus, Onesicretus, and Callisthenes, were the most celebrated of these writers, of whom Diogenes Laertius, or rather a far superior man whom he cites, says, *Λαθάνει δὲ αὐτοὺς τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων καταθώματα βαρβάρους προσαπτιντές.* "They are mistaken, when they refer the Grecian discoveries to the Barbarians." It was natural for the Eastern nations, when they had adopted the language and learning of the Greeks, to avail themselves of Grecian authorities, to prove how much that celebrated nation owed to people whom they proudly denominated Barbarians. Hence the fables of Berossus the Chaldean, of Manetho the Egyptian, of Sanchoniathon the Phœnician. We except from this class of fabulists the Jew, Josephus, the antiquity of whose nation rests on evidence which it would be irreverent to name in such company. Had Pythagoras or Thales been acquainted with the Jewish religion, they would have learned far nobler notions of the Deity, than those which it appears they entertained. Anaxagoras, surnamed *ἰσως*, the preceptor of the great Pericles, was the first Grecian philosopher who saw, by the light of reason, the natural and moral attributes of God, so sublimely described in the Psalms of David. Yet it never was said, that Anaxagoras had seen the Psalms, the Books of Moses, or any part of the sacred writings; and it may be remarked, that Josephus himself, in his first book (cont. Ap.), however zealous to prove, that the Greeks derived their knowledge from the East, can cite no author in favour of this opinion, who lived before the age of Alexander.

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several years in the ancient kingdom of Egypt⁵³, which had been long familiarly known to the Grecian mariners, and where the son of Mnefar-chus might probably enjoy the protection of many hereditary friends. In that country he probably made some additions to his knowledge in arithmetic and geometry; he certainly learned many traditions concerning the gods, and the human soul: but what particularly deserved his attention

⁵³ There is a famous passage in Isocrates's panegyric of Busiris, which might seem to contradict what is said in the preceding note, if we did not reflect, that the rules of panegyric require not always a strict adherence to historical truth. In speaking of the ancient wisdom and piety of the Egyptians, and particularly of the sacerdotal order, he says, that he himself is not the first who perceived and acknowledged their merit; that many philosophers had done this before him, and particularly Pythagoras the Samian. *Ὅς αφικόμενος εἰς Αἴγυπτον, καὶ μαθητὴς ἐκεῖνων γενομένος, τὴν τε ἀλλήν φιλοσοφίαν πρῶτος εἰς τῆς Ἑλλήνας ἐκομισε, καὶ τὰ περὶ τὰς θυσίας τε καὶ τὰς ἀγίτειας τὰς ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς ἐπιφανετέρον τῶν ἄλλων ἐσπαύσατο. ἡγήμενος, εἰ καὶ μηδὲν αὐτῷ διὰ ταῦτα πλεονεκτήσειτο παρὰ τῶν θεῶν, ἀλλὰ παρὰ γε τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐκ τῶν μάλιστα αὐτὸν εὐδοκίμησιν. ὅπερ αὐτῷ καὶ συνέβη. Τούτων γὰρ εὐδοξία τῆς ἀλλοῦς ἀπαντὰς ὑπερέβαλε, ὥστε καὶ τῆς νεωτέρας ἀπαντὰς ἐπιθρῆμειν αὐτῷ μαθητὰς εἶναι, καὶ τῆς πρεσβυτέρας ἡδὺν ὄραν τῆς παιδείας τῆς αὐτῶν ἐκείνῳ συγγιγνομένης ἢ τῶν οἰκείων ἐπιμελημένης.* "Who coming to Egypt, and being instructed by the priests of that country, first introduced other kinds of learning into Greece, and particularly a more accurate knowledge of religious rites and ceremonies," (I have generalised the expression *θυσίας καὶ ἀγίτειας ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς*,) "of which he was a careful observer, thinking that although he were entitled to no peculiar favour on that account from the gods, he would thereby, at least, procure esteem among men, which also happened to him; for he so far eclipsed the glory of all other philosophers, that all the young desired to become his disciples, and the old were better pleased to see their sons in the company of Pythagoras, than engaged in the most lucrative or honourable pursuits." If what is said in my account of the life and writings of Isocrates be considered with attention, this passage will only serve to confirm the ob-

was,

was, the secret symbolic writing of the priests, and the singular institutions and policy of the sacerdotal order, by which that body of men had long been enabled to govern prince and people⁵⁴. At his return from Egypt and the East, Pythagoras found his native country governed, or rather insulted, by the artful and long fortunate Polycrates; a tyrant whose power seemed so firmly established, that there remained no hopes to subvert it, and under whose jealous eye the son of Mnesarchus could neither display his talents, nor enjoy personal security: he therefore returned to European Greece, and again assisted at the Olympic games; where being saluted by the then honoured name of Sophist, he modestly declined that distinction for the humbler title of Philosopher; and when asked what he precisely meant by this new appellation, he is said to have replied, "That, in the same manner as at the Olympic assembly, some men came to contend for crowns and honours, others to sell their merchandise, and a third class merely to see and examine every thing which passed in that celebrated convention; so, on the greater theatre of the world, while many struggled for the glory of a name, and many for the advantages of fortune; a few, and but a few, neither covetous of money, nor ambitious of fame, were contented with beholding the wonders of so magnificent a spectacle⁵⁵." This definition has been

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Olymp.
lvi.
A.C. 560.

⁵⁴ Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, passim; and Strabo, l. x. p. 482.

⁵⁵ Cicero (Tusc. Quæst. v. 3.) has translated a passage to this purpose from Heraclides Ponticus, the scholar of Plato; and

CHAP. XI. been often cited, because it well agrees with the contemplative notions generally entertained of the Pythagorean school; but it will appear in the sequel, that the philosophy of Pythagoras was of a more practical kind.

From Olympia and the republic of Elis, he travelled to the neighbouring territory of Sparta⁵⁶, and spent a considerable time in that capital, diligently studying the laws and institutions of Lycurgus, and observing the manners and genius of the best governed, most virtuous, and most prosperous of all the Grecian states. Here he beheld a constitution of government (the wisdom of which had been long approved by experience) founded on a system of education; and combining, in his clear capacious mind, the Spartan laws and discipline with a mixture of the Egyptian craft and policy, he framed that sublime plan of legislation, which was to be far more extensive than the laws of Lycurgus; and which, at first fixing its root in a small sect at Crotona, was destined, in twenty or thirty years, to diffuse its flourishing branches over Italy and Sicily.

Causes of
his authority in
Italy.

Pythagoras arrived at the capital of Italian Greece in his fortieth year, in the full vigour of mind and body⁵⁷. His fame, doubtless, preceded him; since, whoever had honourably distinguished himself in the general convention at Olympia, was speedily

the original passage of Heraclitus is still preserved in Jamblichus.

⁵⁶ Porphyry. Jamblich. & Justin. l. xx.

⁵⁷ Aristoxenus. apud Jamblich.

known

known and celebrated in the remotest provinces of Greece. His personal acquaintances among the Italian Greeks, whose esteem, or rather respect, he had acquired in that august assembly, would naturally be loud in his praises; and the manners of the age, in which men lived together in crowds, and enjoyed their pastimes, or transacted their serious business with undisguised freedom, in temples and gymnasia, contributed to the rapid increase of his friends and admirers. Upon his arrival at Crotona, he appeared in the public places, displaying his dexterity in those exercises and accomplishments, which were the fashionable objects of pursuit, and the principal sources of honour. His skill in music and medicine, sciences which were far better understood in his native country than in Magna Græcia, procured him particular regard; nor can we hesitate to believe, that his mathematical and natural knowledge would be highly admired by the Greeks of Italy, who, having recently received the first tincture of arts and sciences from the Asiatics, cultivated them with that ardour which novelty inspires; and who seem hitherto to have gained in point of knowledge and civility, in proportion as they had lost in purity of life and manners, by an acquaintance with their Eastern brethren.

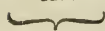
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His superior talents,

Neither the voluptuousness nor the refinement of the inhabitants of Magna Græcia, were incompatible with the hopes and fears of the most puerile superstition; and Pythagoras, who had seen and examined the rites and ceremonies employed by remote

His manner of life,

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The happy
revolution
which he
produced
at Crotona.

remote nations, celebrated for their antiquity and their wisdom, to avert the displeasure, or to gain the good-will of their invisible protectors, called forth the whole force of this powerful, yet dangerous instrument of policy, to excite respect for his person, and reverence for his instructions. He carefully frequented, at an early hour, the temples of the gods; his regular purifications and sacrifices announced superior sanctity of character; his food was of the purest kind, that no corporeal stain might interrupt his fancied communication with his celestial friends; and he was clothed in the linen of Egypt, which was the dress⁵⁸ of the sacerdotal order in that native land of superstition, as well as of the Athenian magistrates and nobles, in the early and pious times of their republic⁵⁹. The respect excited by such artifices (if we may degrade by that name the means used to deceive men into their duty and happiness) was enhanced by the high renown, the long travels, the venerable aspect, the harmonious voice, the animated and affecting eloquence, of the Samian philosopher. His hearers sometimes amounted to two thousand of the principal citizens of Crotona; and the magistrates of that republic erected, soon after his arrival among them, an elegant and spacious edifice, which was appropriated to the virtuous lessons of this admired stranger, who pleased their taste, and gratified their fancy, while he condemned their manners, and reproached their vices. Equally rapid and astonishing, and

⁵⁸ Diodorus.

⁵⁹ Thucyd. l. i.

not more astonishing than advantageous, if we may credit the general voice of antiquity, was the reformation produced at Crotona in persons of every age, and of either sex, by this singular man. The women laid aside their ornaments, and resumed their modesty; the youth preferred their duty to their pleasures; the old improved their understanding, and almost neglected to improve their fortunes.

Yet this revolution of manners was not surely to His school. instantaneous, as the concurring exaggerations of wonder and credulity were naturally inclined to represent it. The same writers, who would thus magnify the fame of Pythagoras, acknowledge, that soon after coming to Crotona, he chose a select number of his most assiduous disciples, and those chiefly persons of weight in the republic, whose temper, character, and views, best suited his own. These were formed into an association, or separate order of men, into which none were admitted who possessed not qualities and endowments worthy of that honour. In order to confirm this association, as well as to obtain the purposes for which it had been instituted, Pythagoras employed the cypher, or symbolic writing, and other secrets, which he had learned from the wisdom, or rather cunning, of the Egyptian priests: his scholars were taught certain signs or words, by which they might know each other; they could correspond, when separated by place, in an unknown character; and strangers of all countries, Greeks and Barbarians, were promiscuously admitted into the society, after undergoing
a due

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Its influ-
ence on
affairs of
state.
Olymp.
lvii. 3.
A. C. 550.

His great
views.

His poli-
tics.

a due probation as to their dispositions and understanding. In a few years, three hundred men, all Pythagoreans, held the sovereignty of Crotona; the influence of the new sect extended with rapidity over Locri, Rhegium, Catana, and other cities of Italy and Sicily; the disciples of Pythagoras were diffused over ancient Greece, and the isles of the Ægean sea; and it seemed as if the sage of Samos, whose nobler ambition declined and disdained any particular office of power and dignity, had conceived the sublime idea of forming a school, or rather an association of men, who might govern the world, while they were themselves governed by wisdom and virtue.

Pythagoras was deeply persuaded, that the happiness of nations depends chiefly on the government under which they live; and the experience of his own times, and of his own island in particular, might teach him the dangerous tendency of democratic turbulence on the one hand, and jealous tyranny on the other⁶⁰. He preferred, therefore,

to

⁶⁰ A striking example of this appeared at that time in Sicily, if we credit Jamblicus, who places the reign of Phalaris, at Agrigentum, in the age of Pythagoras. The doubtful, or rather incredible, history of this tyrant, may be comprised in few words. His reign, of about sixteen years, was distinguished by intolerable atrocities. He burned his enemies in a brazen bull; and, as lust or cruelty happened to direct, sometimes abused, and sometimes eat, boys. Phalaris, together with his mother and friends, (could such a monster have friends?) were burned, by the long-injured Agrigentines, in his own bull. This is the abominable tyrant, whose spurious letters furnished an opportunity to Dr. Bentley to display his profound erudition (see his Dissert. upon Phalaris). But that very learned man seems not to suspect, that the history of Phalaris is as spurious as his epistles. It was a common artifice among Greek poets and orators (see, in vol. i.

to all governments, a moderate aristocracy; which seems, without exception, to have been the well-founded opinion of the greatest men of antiquity, since, under the administration of a senate, the republics of Greece, of Rome, and of Carthage, attained their highest prosperity and splendour. Yet he was extremely averse to arbitrary power,

p. 367. the speech of Socrates the Corinthian), to exaggerate the vices of bad princes. Of this we shall find many examples in the following parts of this work. This practice began early; for Pindar says,

Τον δὲ ταυρῷ χυλκῶ καυτηρὰ νηλεὲς ἄνθρωπος
Ἐχθρὰ Φαλαρινὸν κατεχὼ πάντα φάτις.

ΠΥΤΗ. ἰ. Εἰρωδ. κωλ. ιε.

Aristotle mentions, *Το περὶ Φαλαριν λεγόμενον*, the hearsay about Phalaris, which Aspasius explains, *Ὁ δὲ Φαλαρις λεγεται φαγεῖν τὸν ἑαυτοῦ παιδα*. Phalaris is said to have eat his own son. In the same chapter (c. v. l. vi. *Ethic. Nicom.*), speaking of brutal passions, Aristotle instances Phalaris sometimes devouring boys, sometimes using them as the instruments of an absurd venereal pleasure: “*Πρὸς ἀφροδισίων ἀποπὼν ἡδονήν*.” The philosopher does not say, that he believes these monstrous fictions, any more than Cicero, “*Ille nobilis taurus, quem crudelissimus omnium tyrannorum Phalaris habuisse dicitur*,” l. iv. in *Verrem*, c. xxxiii. Timæus, the historian of Sicily, who was more likely than any other writer to be well informed concerning the transactions in his own island, represents the story of Phalaris’s bull as a mere fable. Polyb. Excerpt. ver. 3. p. 47. Polybius, indeed, attempts to refute Timæus, but I think, as to the main point, with little success. Nor is it surprising that this judicious writer should be carried along by the torrent. The republicans of Greece and Rome delighted in blackening the characters of tyrants; *Τετραγώντες δὲ τὴν ὁμοιότητα τῶν τροπῶν, καὶ τὴν ἀσεβείαν τῶν πράξεων*; “exaggerating, after the manner of tragedians, the fierceness of their manners, and the impiety of their actions.” For this reason, the absurd fictions concerning Dionysius of Syracuse, Alexander of Phææ, &c. are related by many respectable writers. For this reason Hieronymus was described in the blackest colours, vide Excerpt. ex Polyb. l. vii. p. 10. And for this reason the enormous cruelties of Phalaris, which no nation, and far less the Sicilians in that age, could have tolerated, receive countenance from some of the highest authorities of antiquity.

what-

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whatever shape it might assume; and the main aim of his institution was, to prevent oppression in the magistrates and licentiousness in the people. The dead letter of the law could never, he thought, effect that salutary purpose, until men were so trained by education and discipline, as to regard the great duties of life as its most agreeable amusement, and to consider the esteem of their fellow-citizens, and their own, as the chief source of their enjoyment. Magistrates, thus formed, would command a willing obedience, and the inhabitants of Magna Græcia must soon attain the most perfect state of which political society is susceptible.

Morality.

To explain at large the system of Pythagoras, would be to write a treatise of sublime, yet practical morality, since his conclusions are strictly founded on the nature of man. Besides the propensities common to us with inferior natures, and besides the selfish and artificial passions of avarice and ambition, he found in the human breast the seeds of nobler faculties, fitted to yield an incomparably more durable, more perfect, and more certain gratification. The chief happiness of the mind must be sought in itself, in the enjoyment of intellectual and moral pleasure. Our thoughts are ever, and intimately present with us; and although the bustle of external objects, and the tumult of passion, may sometimes divert their current, they can never dry up their source. The reflections on our own conduct will be continually occurring to our fancy, whatever pains we may take to exclude them; nor can voluptuous enjoyment, or ambitious activity, -
ever

ever so totally occupy the mind of a Persian satrap, or a Grecian demagogue, but that their principal happiness or misery, in the whole course of life, must chiefly depend upon the nature of their reflections on the past, and upon their hopes and fears about futurity. To strengthen this great groundwork of morality, Pythagoras employed the whole force of education and habit. Rules were laid down, to which the members of his respected order bound themselves to conform, and from which none could swerve, without being excluded from a society of which they proved themselves unworthy. The different periods of life had each its appropriated employment. The youth were carefully instructed in the gymnastic exercises, in literature⁶¹, and in science, and especially in the laws and constitution of their country. Their time was so diversified by successive study, exercise, and repose, that no leisure remained for the premature growth of dangerous passions; and it was an important maxim of the Pythagorean school, that many things

⁶¹ So I have translated *Εν γραμμασι και τοις αλλοις μαθημασι*, of Aristoxenus apud Stobæum, Serm. xli. The learned reader will perceive, that I comprehend under the name of youth, the two different periods of of life, or *ἡλικίαι*, which the Greeks denoted by the words *παις* and *νεανίσκος*, boy, and young man. I have done this, because it was not the intention of Aristoxenus to say, that the young men were not still to be employed in literature and science, or that the boys were to be kept ignorant of the laws and constitution. The rules of the Pythagorean school, and the laws of Lycurgus, often explain each other. See vol. i. p. 129, & seqq. It may be worthy of remark, that Jean Jaques Rousseau has borrowed what is rational and practical in his system of education, from these two great sources.

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were best learned late⁶², especially love; from which, if possible, the youth should be restrained till their twentieth year, and after that period should rarely, and with many precautions, indulge a passion, always hurtful to the weak, and which, when injudiciously indulged, enfeebled the most vigorous. He required in those who had attained the age of manhood, that they should no longer live for themselves, but for the business of the community of which they were members. They were to employ the greatest part of the day in the duties of public spirit and patriotism; in the laborious or dangerous offices committed to their charge; and to derive their chief reward from reading, in the eyes of their admiring countrymen, the history of their generous exploits; and from beholding the happy effects of their probity, beneficence, and fortitude.

Rules for
the con-
duct of his
disciples;

The Pythagoreans were strictly enjoined, as their earliest and latest work, to review the actions of the past, and, if time permitted, of many preceding, days. In the morning they repaired alone to the temples, to solitary mountains and forests; and after there conversing with themselves, joined in the conversation of their friends, with whom they assembled, in small companies, to an early and frugal meal, discussed different subjects of philosophy or politics, regulated their conduct for the ensuing day, and by the mutual strength and encourage-

⁶² Aristoxen. apud Stobæum, Serm. lxi. This is the great principle of Rousseau in his *Emile*. The passage of Aristoxenus concerning love, is almost literally translated in that ingenious but fanciful work.

ment acquired in this select society, prepared for the tumultuous bustle of the world, and the contentions of active life. The evening was spent as the morning, with this difference, that they then indulged in the moderate use of flesh and wine, from which they rigidly abstained during the day; and the whole concluded with that self-examination, which was the capital precept of the Pythagorean school.

To enter more fully into the principles of this association, would be repeating what has been formerly observed concerning the laws of Lycurgus. It is sufficient barely to mention, that, like the legislator of Sparta, Pythagoras enjoined the highest respect for age; that, like him, he raised the weaker sex from that state of inferiority in which they were ungenerously kept in all other countries of Greece; that he enured his disciples to temperance and sobriety by the same means employed by Lycurgus; and that both these great men regarded health and vigour of body as the first principle of mental soundness and energy; that the probationary silence of the Pythagoreans, which credulity has so much exaggerated, was nothing more than that prudent, recollected behaviour, required by Lycurgus, who prized higher the caution of silence than the readiness⁶³ of speech; and that the intimacy of the Spartan and Pythagorean friendships, and almost the community of goods, naturally flowed from the general spirit and genius of their respective systems⁶⁴; so that the rules of the Pythagorean order

which coincide with the institutions of Lycurgus.

⁶³ Plut. in Lycurg.

⁶⁴ See vol. i. p. 135.

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were little more than a transcript of the Spartan laws, as these laws themselves were only a refinement on the generous and manly institutions of the heroic ages⁶⁵.

Origin of
the fictions
concerning
Pythagoras.

In the history of a man who entertained such just notions of human life, as did the founder of the Pythagorean school, we may at once reject, as fabulous, the tales related by the vain, lying Greeks, who lived in and after the age of Alexander, when their nation seems to have lost their love of truth along with their liberty, as well as the ridiculous wonders of the later Platonists, those contemplative visionaries, who, during the first centuries of the Christian æra, degraded ancient philosophers, by describing *their* active and useful lives, as if they had resembled their own speculative tranquillity. Yet, after all, should the least extraordinary account of the Pythagorean order still seem incredible, it need only be observed, that modern history, and even our own observation, may have made us acquainted with orders of another kind, of which the rules are more difficult to be observed than those of the Pythagoreans: and it is equally unreasonable and ungenerous, to suppose, that what our own experience teaches us may be done by the illiberal spirit of superstition, could not, in a happier age, be effected by the love of glory, of virtue, and of mankind.

War between Crotona and Sybaris.

The concurring testimony of historians assures us, that the school of Pythagoras had flourished above forty years, to the unspeakable benefit of

⁶⁵ Diodor. l. xii. p. 77, &c.

Magna Græcia, when a war arose between Crotona and Sybaris, the latter of which had ever contemptuously rejected the Pythagorean institutions. The city of Sybaris was founded (as above mentioned) by the Achæans, on the confluence of the river Sybaris, from which the city derives its name, and the winding stream of Crathis, which descends from the Lucanian mountains. The fertility of the soil, the happy temperature of the climate, the resources of fishing, navigation, manufactures, and commerce, conspired, with the salutary effect of the Achæan laws, wonderfully to increase, in the course of two centuries, the strength and populousness of Sybaris, which was surrounded by walls nine miles in extent, commanded twenty-five subordinate cities, and, could we credit the evidence of writers often prone to exaggeration, brought three hundred thousand men into the field⁶⁷. Riches and luxury proved fatal to the Sybarites, whose effeminacy passed into a proverb⁶⁸, which has been transmitted to modern times. In a decisive battle, they were defeated by the citizens of Crotona, under the command of Milo, a favourite disciple of Pythagoras, who had already obtained universal renown by his Olympic victories⁶⁹.

The Sybarites conquered by Milo the Pythagorean. Olymp. lxviii. 4. A.C. 509.

But the destruction of Sybaris was almost alike fatal to Crotona. The inferior ranks of men in that city, intoxicated with prosperity, and instigated by the artful and ambitious Cylon, whose turbulent man-

Sedition in Crotona.

⁶⁷ Strabo, l. vi. p. 263. Diodor. ibid.

⁶⁸ Athenæus, l. xii. p. 518.

⁶⁹ Strabo, ibid. Pausanias, l. vi. p. 369.

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Proves fatal to the Pythagoreans there.

ners had excluded him from the order of Pythagorians, into which he had repeatedly attempted to enter, became clamorous for an equal partition of the conquered territory of Sybaris; which being denied, as inconsistent with the nature of aristocratical government, they secretly conspired against their magistrates, attacked them by surprise in the senate-house, put many to death, and drove the rest from their country. Pythagoras himself died soon afterwards, in extreme old age, at Metapontum in Lucania⁷⁰. His disciples were scattered over Magna Græcia, and particularly Sicily, which, at the time of the Carthaginian invasion, was governed by men who had imbibed the sublime spirit of their illustrious master.

The Carthaginians invade Sicily. Olymp. lxxv. 1. A.C. 480.

Gelon, who, eleven years before that event, had mounted the throne of Syracuse, was entitled, by the unanimous suffrage of his subjects, to the glorious, though often prostituted, appellation, of Father of his Country⁷¹. The mildness of his government restored the felicity of the heroic ages, whose equitable institutions had much affinity (as above observed) with the political system of Pythagoras. This virtuous prince had cemented an alliance with Theron, king of Agrigentum, by accepting his daughter in marriage; and the confederacy of the two principal states of Sicily seemed to have diffused security and happiness over the whole island, when the immense armament of Carthage was beheld off the northern coast. Though

⁷⁰ Aristoxenus.

⁷¹ Ælian, Var. Hist. l. xiii. c. xxxvii. Plut. in Timol.

not absolutely destitute of naval strength, the Sicilians had nothing by which they could oppose a fleet of two thousand gallies. The enemy landed without opposition in the spacious harbour, or rather bay, of Panormus, whose name may be still recognised in the modern capital Palermo, where the Carthaginians had planted one of their most ancient colonies. Their forces were commanded by Hamilcar, who was deemed a brave and experienced leader. The first care of this general was, to fortify two camps; the one destined for his fleet, which, according to the practice of that age, was drawn on shore; the other intended as a safe retreat for his army, which immediately prepared to form the siege of Himera. Theron used proper measures to defend the second city in his dominions, until his kinsman, the intrepid Gelon, should arrive to his assistance, at the head of an army of fifty thousand foot and five thousand horse. While this numerous army advanced, by rapid marches, towards Himera, they rencountered a foraging party of the enemy, and took ten thousand prisoners. But what appeared a still more important booty to the discernment of Gelon, they seized a messenger from Selinus, a city in the neighbourhood of Agrigentum, which had entered into a treacherous correspondence with the Carthaginians. The prisoner conveyed a letter to Hamilcar, acquainting him, that the Selinuntines would not fail to send the cavalry demanded from them at the appointed time, which was likewise particularly specified. Upon this discovery, Gelon founded a stratagem, not more

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daring than successful. He commanded a chosen body of troops to advance in the night towards the Carthaginian camp, and by day-break to present themselves to Hamilcar, as his Selinuntine auxiliaries; and when admitted, by this artifice, within the rampart, to assassinate the general, and set fire to the fleet⁷².

Defeated
by a stratagem.

It happened on the fatal day, that Hamilcar offered a solemn sacrifice to the bloody divinity of Carthage, who delighted in human victims. While he performed this abominable rite, the soldiers surrounded him unarmed, in the gloomy silence of their detested superstition, with which their minds were totally penetrated. The Sicilian cavalry, being admitted without suspicion, thus found no difficulty to execute their audacious design. Hamilcar, while he sacrificed an innocent and noble youth to the abhorred genius of Superstition, was himself dispatched with a dagger; and next moment the Carthaginian ships were in a blaze. A chain of Sicilian sentinels, posted on the neighbouring eminences, intimated to Gelon the happy success of his stratagem; of which, in order fully to avail himself, that gallant commander immediately conducted the main body of his troops to the Carthaginian army, while it was yet agitated by surprise and terror at the sudden conflagration.

Their disasters.

The furious onset of the Sicilians made a dreadful havoc among the astonished Barbarians, who recovering, however, their faculties, began to defend

⁷² Diodor. l. ix. sect. 25, & seqq. Polyæn. l. i. c. xxvii.

themselves

themselves with vigour; when the melancholy tidings, that their ships were all burnt, and their general slain, drove them to despair and flight. Gelon commanded his troops not to give quarter to an enemy, who, though defeated, still seemed formidable by their numbers. It is reported, that an hundred and fifty thousand perished in the battle, and the pursuit. The remainder seized an eminence, where they could not long maintain themselves, for want of water and provisions. In the language of an ancient historian, all Africa seemed to be taken captive in Sicily. Gelon distributed the prisoners among the Sicilian cities, in proportion to the contingents of troops which they had respectively raised for this memorable service. The greater part falling to the share of Syracuse and Agrigentum, were employed in beautifying and enlarging those capitals⁷³, whose magnificent monuments, still conspicuous in their ruins, are supposed, with great probability, to be the effect of Carthaginian labour.

The melancholy tidings affected Carthage with consternation and despair. The inhabitants of that city, ever shamefully depressed by bad fortune, in proportion as they were immoderately elated by the deceitful gifts of prosperity, dreaded every moment to behold the victorious enemy in their harbour. To ward off this calamity their ambassadors were sent to crave a suspension of hostilities on any terms the victorious Greeks might think

Treaty of
peace be-
tween Ge-
lon and
the Car-
thagi-
nians.

⁷³ Cicero, Orat. iv. in Verrem.

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proper to impose. Gelon received them with such moderation as marked the superiority of his character, and told them, that he would desist from every purpose of revenge, on condition that the Carthaginians paid two thousand talents of silver, to be distributed among the cities of Sicily, which had incurred trouble and expence by the war; that they thenceforth abstained from the abominable practice of insulting the gods by human victims; that they erected two temples, one in Carthage, another in Syracuse, to preserve the memory of the war, and the articles of the peace ⁷⁴.

Olymp.
lxxxii.
A.C. 449.

This honourable treaty was a prelude to that still more famous, concluded thirty years afterwards between the Athenians and the Persians. It marked a nation superior to its enemies not only in valour but humanity, and conferred more true glory than could be acquired by the most splendid series of victories. It might be expected, however, and seems much to have been desired, that a people so advantageously distinguished as were the Greeks during that age in arts and arms; a people who had repelled, defeated, and disgraced the most populous and powerful nations, and who were alike prompted, by ambition and revenge, to the attainment of distant conquest, should have united their efforts against the enemies who still made war on them, and, advancing in a rapid career of victory, have diffused, along with their dominion, their manners, knowledge, and civility over the

A.C. 504.

⁷⁴ Diodor. Sicul. *ibid.*

eastern world. But various events and causes, which we shall have occasion afterwards to explain, tended to detach the colonies of Magna Græcia from the affairs of the mother-country, as well as to disunite the two most powerful republics of that country by intestine discord.

While the fortune of Athens raised her to such power as threatened the liberty of Sicily and Greece, the kings of Syracuse and Agrigentum contented themselves with the humbler glory of embellishing their capitals with barbaric spoils, and producing those wonders of art, which, in the time of Cicero and Verres, were esteemed among the most precious monuments of antiquity⁷⁵. The golden medals of Gelon, still preserved and of the highest beauty⁷⁶, justify the glowing expressions of the Roman orator.

In Italy, the citizens of Crotona had too soon cause to lament their insurrection against their magistrates, and their forsaking the discipline of Pythagoras. They who had hitherto defeated superior numbers, who had furnished so many victors in the Olympic contest, and whose country was distinguished by the epithet of healthy, on a supposition that the vigorous bodies of its inhabitants proceeded from an effect of the climate, were now totally routed and put to flight at the river Sagra, with an army of an hundred and thirty thousand men, by the Locrians and Rhegians,

Decay of
Magna
Græcia,
and de-
struction
of the Py-
thago-
reans.

⁷⁵ Cicero in Verrem, passim.

⁷⁶ Mem. de Trevoux, l'ann. 1727, p. 1449.

whose

CHAP. whose forces were far less numerous. The other
XI. Greek cities of Italy, which are said to have imitated the fatal example of Crotona, were harassed by wars against each other, or against their barbarous neighbours. In consequence of these misfortunes, the Pythagoreans again recovered their credit; and about sixty years after the death of the great founder of their order, Zaleucus and Charondas, the first in Locri, the second in Thurium, endeavoured to revive the Pythagorean institutions, which, perhaps, were too perfect for the condition of the times. In less than forty years a new persecution entirely drove the Pythagoreans from Italy, and completed, according to Polybius, the confusion and misery of that once happy country⁷⁷.

⁷⁷ Polybius, i. 203.

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Glory of Athens.—Military Success of the Confederates.—Athens rebuilt and fortified.—Extent of its Walls and Harbours.—The Confederates take Byzantium.—Conspiracy of Pausanias.—Banishment of Themistocles.—Virtue of Aristides.—Cimon assumes the Command.—His illustrious Merit and Success.—Revolt of Egypt.—War in Cyprus.—Peace with Persia.—Domestic Transactions of Greece.—The Athenian Greatness.—Envy of Sparta, Thebes, and Argos.—Earthquake in Sparta.—Revolt of the Helots.—War between the Elians and Pisans.—The Temple and Statue of Olympian Jupiter.—Dissensions in Argolis.—Revolt in Bœotia.—Truce of Thirty Years.—Character of Pericles.—Subjection of the Athenian Allies and Colonies.—Spirit of the Athenian Government.

FROM the battles of Mycalé and Platæa, to the memorable war of Peloponnesus, elapsed half a century, the most illustrious in the Grecian annals. A single republic, one of sixteen states, whose united possessions hardly equalled the extent of Scotland, and whose particular territory is scarcely visible in a map of the world, carried on an offensive war against the Persian empire, and, though surrounded by jealous allies or open enemies, prosecuted

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The glory
of Athens;
A. C. 479
—431.

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in arms ;

secuted this extraordinary enterprise with unexampled success ; at length, granting such conditions of peace as the pride of victory may dictate, and the weight of accumulated disasters condescend to solicit or accept. In that narrow space of time the same republic erected, on the feeble basis of her scanty population and diminutive territory, a mighty mass of empire ; established and confirmed her authority over the extent of a thousand miles of the Asiatic coast, from Cyprus to the Thracian Eöphorus ; took possession of forty intermediate islands ¹, together with the important straits which join the Euxine and the Ægean ; conquered and colonized the winding shores of Macedon and Thrace ; commanded the coast of the Euxine from Pontus to the Chersonesus Taurica, or Crim Tartary ; and, overawing the barbarous natives by the experienced terrors of her fleet ², protected against *their* injustice and violence, but at the same time converted, to the purposes of her own ambition and interest, the numerous but scattered colonies which Miletus, and other Greek cities of Asia, had at various times established in those remote regions ³. Our wonder will be justly encreased, if we consider that Athens obtained those immortal trophies, not over ignorant savages or effeminate slaves, but over men who had the same language and laws, the same

¹ Several of these islands had been formerly conquered by Athenian commanders, particularly Miltiades, as we have related above ; but having rebelled against the severe government of Athens, they were finally subdued by Pericles.

² Plut. in Pericle.

³ Strabo, Geograph. passim.

blood and lineage, the same arts and arms, in short, every thing common with the victors but their audacity and fortune. CHAP.
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But it is the peculiar glory of the Athenians that, during this rapid series of military and naval triumphs, they cultivated, with a generous enthusiasm, the arts which adorn peace as well as war, and improved these decorations of polished life into such perfection as few nations have been able to imitate, and none have found it possible to surpass. During the administration of a single man, more works of elegance and splendour, more magnificent temples, theatres, and porticoes were erected within the walls of Athens, than could be raised during many centuries in Rome, though mistress of the world, by the wealth and labour of tributary provinces⁴. In the same period of time sculpture attained a sublimity, from which that noble art could never afterwards but descend and degenerate; and a republic hitherto inferior in works of invention and genius to several of her neighbours, and even of her own colonies, produced, in the single lifetime of Pericles, those inestimable models of poetry, eloquence, and philosophy⁵, which, in every succeeding age, the enlightened portion of mankind hath invariably regarded as the best standards, not merely of composition and style,

⁴ Plutarch. in Pericle.

⁵ Pericles may be considered as the contemporary of Socrates, Sophocles, Euripides, Thucydides, &c. since, although he died before them of the plague, these and other great men flourished during his administration.

but

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but of taste and reason. The name of Greek seemed thenceforth to be sunk in that of Athenian; Athenian writers are our surest and almost only guides in relating the subsequent transactions of the whole nation⁶; and from them we learn what is yet the most extraordinary circumstance respecting the Athenian empire, that it had been built on such stable foundations, and reared with such art and skill, as might have long defied the hostile jealousy of Greece and Persia, confederate in arms and resentment, if various causes, which human prudence could neither foresee nor prevent, had not shaken its firmness, and precipitated its downfall⁷.

Such is the subject which I have undertaken to treat in this and the two following Chapters; a subject worthy to animate the diligence, and call forth the vigour of an historian: but, if he truly deserves that respected name, he will remember that it is less his duty to amuse the fancy by general description, than to explain, with precision and perspicuity, the various transactions of this interesting and splendid theme; to give the reader a full and distinct view of the complicated matter which it involves; and to remove every adventitious circumstance that might distract or dazzle the attention, as astronomers, in viewing the sun, are careful to ward off its surrounding splendour.

⁶ I mean Thucydides and Xenophon, together with the Athenian orators, philosophers, and poets.

⁷ Thucydid. l. vii. & viii. *passim*.

The military success of the Athenians⁸ (which naturally forms the first branch of the subject, because it not only supplied the materials of future improvements, but awakened that energy requisite to cultivate and complete them) includes three separate actions which were carried on at the same time, and conspired to the same end, yet cannot be related in one perpetual narrative, without occasioning some confusion of ideas, alike destructive of the pleasure and of the use of history. While we endeavour to keep each series of events unbroken and distinct, we must be careful to point out its influence on the simultaneous or succeeding transactions of the times, that our relation may be at once satisfactory and faithful. In such a delineation the trophies of the Persian war justly claim the first and most conspicuous place; the hostile animosity of rival states, which continually envied and opposed, but, for reasons that will be fully explained, could neither prevent nor retard the growing superiority of Athens, shall occupy the middle of the picture; and we shall throw into the back ground the successive usurpations of that fortunate republic over her allies, colonies, and neighbours.

Division of
the sub-
ject.

⁸ The chief materials for this portion of history consist in the first and second books of Thucydides; the eleventh and twelfth of Diodorus Siculus; Plutarch's lives of Themistocles, Aristides, Cimon, Pericles; Pausanias's Description of Greece, and Pliny's Natural History: scattered facts are supplied by other ancient writers, whose works will be carefully cited.

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The Athenians take
Sestos.
Olymp.
lxxv. 2.
A. C. 479.

The common fears which, notwithstanding innumerable sources of animosity, had formed, and hitherto upheld a partial confederacy of the Greeks, were removed by the decisive victories of Plataea and Mycalé. After these memorable events, it was the first care of the Athenians to bring home their wives, children, and most valuable effects from the isles of Ægina and Salamis. In the latter island they celebrated their good fortune by a national solemnity. The sublime Sophocles joined in the chorus of boys which danced, in exultation, around the Barbarian spoils⁹; the valour of his predecessor, Æschylus, had contributed to the victories by which they were obtained; and his rival, the tender Euripides, was born in the isle of Salamis¹⁰, on that important day which proved alike glorious to Greece, and fatal to Persia. But an attention to domestic concerns prevented not the Athenians from pushing the war with vigour, though deserted by the Spartans and other Peloponnesians, who failed home before winter. The Asiatic colonies, animated by the recent recovery of freedom, seconded the Athenian ardour; and the confederates, having successfully infested the territories of the great king, besieged and took the rich city of Sestos in the Chersonesus of Thrace, the only place of strength which adhered to the Persian interest in that fertile peninsula¹¹.

⁹ Athenæus, l. i.¹⁰ Vita Euripid.¹¹ Herodot. l. ix. c. cvi. Diodor. l. xi. c. xxxvii.

During

During the two following years the war languished abroad, while the symptoms of jealousy and discord, which had already appeared in the separation of the Athenian and Spartan fleets, broke out with more virulence at home. The Athenians began the laborious task of rebuilding their ruined city, which the Persian spoils might contribute to enrich with uncommon magnificence, and which the acquaintance gained in the course of the war, with the graceful forms of Ionic and Doric architecture, might enable them to adorn with more beauty and elegance than had yet been displayed in Europe. But the weighty advice of Themistocles prevailed on them to suspend this noble undertaking, and engaged them, instead of decorating their capital with temples, theatres, and gymnasia, to fortify it by walls of such strength and solidity as might thenceforth bid defiance to every enemy, whether foreign or domestic. In an age when the art of attack was so rude and imperfect, that the smallest fortrefs formed an object of importance, such a design could not fail of exciting jealousy in the neighbouring republics. The measure was scarcely determined when an embassy arrived from Sparta, remonstrating against a design peculiarly dangerous and alarming to those who owed their safety to the weakness of their cities. “If the Greeks,” it was said, “had possessed any town of impregnable strength, they must have found it impossible to expel the Barbarians from

C H A P.
XII.Athens
rebuilt and
fortified.
Olymp.
lxxv. 3, 4.
A. C. 478
& 477.Jealousy of
Sparta,

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their country. The Athenians therefore, who had hitherto so generously maintained the cause of the confederacy, ought not only to desist from raising walls and fortifications, but even to prevent a similar design in any republic beyond the isthmus; the Peloponnesus was alone sufficient to afford, in time of danger, a secure refuge to the whole Grecian name."

discovered
by The-
mistocles;

Themistocles easily unveiled the suspicion and hatred concealed under this specious mask of public utility, and encouraged his countrymen to elude the Spartan artifice by similar address. The senate of the five hundred, who gave audience to foreign ambassadors, declared that Athens would adopt no measure inconsistent with the public interest, and promised speedily to send an embassy, in their turn, which would remove all groundless apprehensions entertained on that subject. The Lacedæmonians having returned with this temporising answer, Themistocles was immediately dispatched to Sparta, and expected, as he had previously concerted matters with his countrymen¹², to be followed, at a proper time, by Aristides, the most respected character of his age; and by Lisicles, an able orator in the senate and assembly. Meanwhile the Athenian walls arose with unexampled celerity. Not only slaves, artificers by profession, and the poorer classes of citizens, but magistrates of the

¹² Idem ibid. & in Themist. *Lyfias Orat. Funeb. & cont. Alcib.*

first rank, the venerable fathers of the republic, wrought with their own hands, and with unceasing industry. The feeble efforts of women and children contributed to the useful labour. The most superstitious of men neglected their accustomed solemnities, and no longer acknowledged the distinction of days or seasons : nor did even the silent tranquillity of night abate the ardour of their diligence. The ruins of their city happily supplied them with a rich variety of material ; no edifice was spared, public or private, sacred or profane ; the rude sculpture of ancient temples, even the mutilated tombs of their ancestors, were confounded in the common mass ; and, at the distance of near a century, the singular appearance of the wall, composed of stones rough and unpolished, of various colours and unequal size, attested the rapid exertions by which the work had been constructed ¹³.

Themistocles had hitherto, under various pretences, avoided declaring his commission before the Spartan senate. When urged to this measure by some of the magistrates, who began to suspect his silence, he still alleged the absence of his colleagues as a sufficient reason for delay. But a company of travellers, who had recently visited Athens, gave intelligence of the extraordinary works carrying on in that city. This information, and the resentment of the Spartans which it occasioned, must have disconcerted a man who possessed less cool

and its
effects
eluded by
his ad-
dresses.

¹³ Thucyd. l. i. c. lxxxix. & seqq.

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boldness than the commander at Salamis and Artemisium. But Themistocles, with the address congenial to his character, asserted, that it was unworthy the gravity of Sparta to regard the vague rumours of obscure men ; and that before lightly suspecting the approved fidelity of their allies, she ought to bestow some pains in discovering the truth. This declaration was enforced, it is said, by seasonable bribes to the most popular of the Ephori ; and the Spartans, deluded or corrupted, agreed to dispatch a second embassy to Athens, consisting of some of their most respectable citizens. These men had no sooner arrived at their destination, than they were taken into custody, as pledges for the safe return of Themistocles and his colleagues, who by this time had brought him the welcome news, that the walls were completed. The Athenian ambassadors were now prepared to throw off the mask. They appeared in the Lacedæmonian assembly ; and Themistocles, speaking for the rest, declared, that his countrymen needed not to learn from their confederates, what measures were honourable to themselves, and beneficial to the common cause ; that, by his advice, they had firmly defended their city against the assaults of open enemies and jealous friends ; and that if Sparta entertained any resentment of this measure, which was evidently not less conducive to the public interest, than, perhaps, displeasing to private ambition, her anger would be equally unjust and impotent, since her own citizens must remain as hostages at Athens, till his colleagues and himself should be restored

restored in safety to their country¹⁴. Whatever secret indignation this speech might excite, the Spartans thought proper to suppress their animosity. They allowed the ambassadors to return home; but the conduct of Themistocles laid the foundation of that unrelenting hatred with which he was persecuted by Sparta, whose intrigues engaged all Greece, not excepting Athens herself, in the destruction of this illustrious citizen. Yet his eminent services, before they were interrupted by the storm of persecution, gave an opportunity to his unworthy country to display more fully her signal ingratitude¹⁵.

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The ancient Athenian harbour of Phalericum was small, narrow, and inconvenient. To supply its defects, Themistocles, even before the Persian invasion, had recommended the Piræus, a place five miles distant from the citadel, furnished with three natural basins, which, if properly fortified, might form a far more commodious and secure station for the Athenian navy. The foundations were laid, and the walls began to rise, when the cruel ravages of the Barbarians interrupted the undertaking. Having in the preceding year fortified the city, Themistocles thought the present a proper time to finish the new harbour¹⁶. His address, his eloquence, and his bribes, were seasonably applied to divert the resentment of Sparta, who, though thenceforth less jealous of the naval than military power of her rival, threatened, on this oc-

Themistocles builds the Piræus. Olymp. lxxv. 4. A.C. 477.

¹⁴ Plut. &c. *ibid*.

¹⁵ Diodor. l. xi. p. 437.

¹⁶ Thucyd. l. i. c. xciii. Plut. in Themist. Diodor. xi. 436.

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caſion, to enter Attica with an armed force. But the artful Athenian had the ſkill to perſuade the Spartans and their allies, that the procuring a ſtrong and capacious harbour was a matter eſſentially requiſite to the common intereſt of the Grecian confederacy. The work, meantime, was carried on at Athens with much ſpirit and activity, and, in leſs than a twelvemonth, brought to ſuch a proſperous concluſion, as could ſcarcely be credited, but on the teſtimony of a contemporary hiſtorian of the moſt approved diligence and fidelity¹⁷. The new walls were ſufficiently broad to admit two carriages abreſt; the ſtones compoſing them were of an immenſe ſize, ſtrongly united by bars of iron, which were faſtened by melted lead. The Piræus ſoon grew into a town, containing many thouſand inhabitants. It was joined to the city by walls begun by Cimon, but finiſhed by Pericles, twenty years after the harbour itſelf had been erected.

A. C. 457. The new buildings of Cimon and Pericles are often mentioned in hiſtory under the name of the Long Walls. They extended forty ſtadia on either ſide; and when added to the circumference of the ancient city (about ſixty ſtadia), give us for the whole circuit of the Athenian fortifications an extent of nearly eighteen Engliſh miles¹⁸.

The war
againſt
Perſia con-
tinued by
the confe-
derates;

The altercations and animofities excited by ſuch undertakings among the confederates at home, prevented not their united arms from aſſaulting the

¹⁷ Thucyd. ubi ſupra.

¹⁸ Pauſanias, p. 20, & ſeqq. Strabo, p. 391, & ſeqq. Plut. in Cimon.

dominions

dominions of the great king. Thirty Athenian, and fifty Peloponnesian ships, had been employed to expel the Persian garrisons from the sea-ports which they still occupied in the Hellespont, the Propontis, and the Ægean isles. The European fleet, being seasonably joined by various squadrons from the Greek cities of Asia, scoured the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, and delivered from oppression the long-enslaved island of Cyprus. Their next operation must have been at a considerable distance of time, since they had to return near two hundred leagues westward, and then to proceed almost as far towards the north, and the Bosphorus of Thrace. At the entrance of this celebrated canal, which joins the Euxine and Propontis, the city of Byzantium, destined in future ages to become the seat of empire, and long to remain the chief emporium of Europe and of Asia, had been first founded by a feeble colony of Megareans, which had gradually become populous, flourishing, and independent, but which was actually commanded and insulted by armed Barbarians. It is not probable that Xerxes, or his ministers, perceived the peculiar security of Byzantium, situate between the Bosphorus and the Hellespont, two straits, which it might occasionally shut to an hostile navy, or open to the fleets of commerce. But had they been sensible of this advantage, the misfortunes hitherto attending all their maritime enterprises must have rendered it impossible to encourage their seamen to resist a victorious enemy. They discovered, however, more than their usual

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who take
Byzan-
tium.
Olymp.
lxxvi. I.
A.C. 476.

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vigour, in defending, by land, a place which they regarded as the center of very valuable possessions. The adjacent coast of Thrace forms a striking contrast with the inland parts of that country. Instead of bleak heaths, and snowy mountains, which deform the inhospitable regions of Hæmus and Rhodopé, the maritime provinces produce in abundance, vines, olives, the most useful grains, and the most delicious fruits. The climate vies with the delightful softness of the Asiatic plains; and the soil had been long cultivated by Greek colonies, who had widely extended themselves on both sides of Byzantium. The Barbarians strengthened the garrison of the place, which was well supplied with provisions, and commanded by Persians of the first distinction, among whom were several kinsmen of the great king. The siege was obstinate, but the events of it are not described in history. It is only known, that the walls were stormed, and that an immense booty, together with many Persian princes and nobles, fell into the hands of the victors¹².

The conspiracy of
Pausanias;

Here ends the glory of Pausanias, who still commanded the forces of the confederacy; a man whose fame would rival the most illustrious names of antiquity, had he fallen in the siege of Byzantium. The rich spoils of Plataea, of which the tenth was allotted to him, as general, raised him above the equality required by the republican institutions of his country. His recent conquest still farther augmented his wealth and his ambition; a continual

¹² Plut. in Aristid. Thucyd. l. i. 95; & seqq. Diodor. l. xi. 44-46.

flow of prosperity, which is dangerous to the best regulated minds, proved fatal to the aspiring temper of Pausanias. As he conceived himself too great to remain a subject, he was willing to become a sovereign, through the assistance of Xerxes, the inveterate enemy of his country. To this prince he made application, by means of Gongylus the Eretrian, a fit instrument for any kind of villany. To such an associate Pausanias had entrusted the noble Persians taken in Byzantium. This man escaped with his prisoners across the Bosphorus, and conveyed a letter to the great king, in which the Spartan general, having mentioned, as an indubitable proof of his sincerity, the restoring his captive kinsmen, proposed to enter into strict amity with Xerxes, to take his daughter in marriage, to second his efforts in conquering Greece, and to hold that country as a dependent province of the Persian empire. The Persian is said to have highly relished these proposals, the subjugation of Greece being the great object of his reign. It is certain that he speedily sent Artabazus, a nobleman of confidence, to confer and co-operate with the traitor.

But Pausanias himself acted with the precipitancy and inconsistency of a man, who had either been deluded into treason by bad advice, or totally intoxicated by the dangerous vapours of ambition that floated in his distempered brain. Instead of dissembling his designs until they were ripe for execution, he assumed at once the tone of a master and the manners of a tyrant. He became difficult
of

ill con-
ducted.

CHAP. XII. of access to his colleagues in command; disdained their advice in concerting measures which they were ordered to execute; he was surrounded by guards, chosen from the conquered Barbarians; and he punished the slightest offence in the allied troops with a rigour hitherto unknown to the Grecian discipline. He still managed, indeed, the fierce spirits of the Spartans, but without any degree of prudence, since the distinctions which he demanded for *them*, tended only to irritate and inflame their confederates, who were not allowed to forage, to draw water, to cut down straw for their beds, until the countrymen of Pausanias had been previously furnished with all these articles.

The allies
reject his
authority;
Olymp.
lxxvi. 1.
A.C. 476.

This intolerable insolence disgusted and provoked the army in general, but especially the Ionians, who lamented that they had been no sooner delivered from the shackles of Persian despotism, than they were bent under the severer and more odious yoke of Sparta. By common consent, they repaired to the Athenian Aristides, and his colleague Cimon, the son of Miltiades, a youth of the fairest hopes, who had signalized his patriotism and valour in all the glorious scenes of the war. Their designs being approved by the Athenian admirals, Uliades and Antagoras, who respectively commanded the fleets of Samos and Chios, the bravest of all the maritime allies, seized the first opportunity to insult the galley of Pausanias; and when reproached and threatened by the Spartan, they desired him to thank Fortune, who had favoured him at Plataea, the memory of which victory alone saved him from
the

the immediate punishment of his arrogance and cruelty. These words speedily re-echoed through the whole fleet, and served, as soon as they were heard, for the signal of general revolt. The different squadrons of Asia and the Hellespont sailed from their stations, joined the ships of Uliades and Antagoras, loudly declared against the insolent ambition of Pausanias, abjured the proud tyranny of Sparta, and for ever ranged themselves under the victorious colours of Athens, whose generous magnanimity seemed best fitted to command the willing obedience of freemen ²⁰.

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and submit to the Athenians.

This revolution had immediate and important effects, which we shall proceed to explain, when we have punished and dismissed the unworthy Pausanias. Apprised of his malversation and treachery, the Spartan senate recalled him, to stand trial for his life. But his immense wealth enabling him to corrupt the integrity of his judges, he escaped without farther punishment than degradation from his office, and paying a heavy fine. In his stead, the Spartans substituted, not one admiral, but several captains, with divided authority, thereby to remove the odium and resentment which the insolence of unlimited command had excited among their confederates. Pausanias, though divested of his public character, having accompanied these officers to the Hellespont, in a vessel fitted out at his private expence, began to display more arrogance than ever. He disdained not only the manners and be-

Pausanias recalled by the Spartans. Olymp. lxxvi. 2. A.C. 475.

Returns to the east;

²⁰ Nepos in Pausan. Plutarch. in Aristid.

haviour,

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haviour, but the dress and appearance of a Greek; carried on, almost openly, his treacherous correspondence with Artabazus; increased the number of his Barbarian guards and attendants; trampled with contempt on the most revered institutions of his country; and assumed that provoking pomp of power, and that offensive ostentation of vice, which disgraced the profligate lives of the Persian satraps²¹.

recalled by
the scytalé;

When the Spartan magistrates received a full account of his pride and folly, they were apprehensive lest he might refuse to return home on an ordinary summons, and therefore employed the form of the scytalé, a form reserved for the most solemn occasions. The scytalé (for opinion can give importance to any thing) was only a narrow scroll of parchment, which had been rolled on a piece of wood, and then stamped with the decree of the republic. Every Spartan, invested with authority at home or abroad, possessed a tally exactly corresponding to the rod on which the parchment had been first rolled. By applying his tally, the words of the scytalé necessarily arranged themselves in their original form, and attested the authentic command of the magistrate. As tutor to the infant king of Sparta, Pausanias had been furnished with an instrument of this kind; and such is the effect of legal formality, that a man who would probably have despised the injunction of a simple letter, returned without delay to a country which he had

²¹ Thucydid. i. 95. & 128.

betrayed,

betrayed, when recalled by this frivolous, but re-
spected ceremony.

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and
punished.

The external professions, and hypocritical pedantry, of Spartan virtue, were most shamefully detected and exposed in the whole affair of Pausanias. Though convicted of the most odious tyranny, extortion, and profligacy, he was still allowed to enjoy the benefit of personal freedom; to correspond by frequent messages with his accomplice Artabazus; and, at length, to tamper with the Helots and Messenians, those oppressed slaves, who were ever ready to rebel against the unrelenting tyranny of their masters. But as it exceeded even the opulence and effrontery of Pausanias, to corrupt and influence the whole republic, those who had either escaped the general contagion of venality, or who were offended at not sharing his bribes, accused him, a third time, of treason to Greece, in consequence of an event which enabled them in the fullest manner to make good the charge. An unhappy youth, who lived with Pausanias as the infamous minister of his pleasure, was destined by that monster to become the victim of his ambition. He was charged with a letter from his master to Artabazus, in which, after explaining the actual state of his affairs, Pausanias hinted to him, as had been his usual practice, to destroy the bearer. The suspicious youth, who had observed that none of those sent on such errands ever returned to their country, broke open the letter, and read his own fate. Fired with resentment, he instantly carried the writing to the enemies of Pausanias, who prudently

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dently advised the messenger to take refuge in the temple of Neptune, expecting that his master would soon follow him. . Meanwhile they practised a concealment in the wall of the temple, and having acquainted the Ephori, and other chief magistrates, with their contrivance for convicting the traitor by his own words, they obtained a deputation to accompany them, to remain concealed with them in the temple, and to overhear the mutual reproaches of Pausanias and his messenger. Yet the superstition of the Spartans permitted them not to seize the criminal in that sacred edifice. He was allowed to retire in safety ; and when the senate had at length determined to lay hold of him, he was privately admonished of his danger by some members of that venal assembly. Upon this intelligence, he took refuge in the temple of Minerva, from which it being unlawful to drag him, that asylum was surrounded by guards, all necessaries were denied the prisoner, and he thus perished by hunger ²².

Aristides
entrusted
with the
finances of
the confederates.
Olymp.
lxxvi. 2.
A. C. 475.

The late punishment of this detestable traitor could not repair the ruinous effects of his misconduct and villany. Not only the Ionians, who had first begun the revolt, but the foreign confederates in general, loudly rejected the pretensions of Dorcis and other captains whom the Spartans appointed to command them. A few communities of Peloponnesus still followed the Lacedæmonian

²² Thucyd. l. i. c. cxxviii. & seqq. Diodor. l. xi. c. xliv. & Nepos in Pausan.

standard;

standard; but the islanders and Asiatics unanimously applied to Aristides, to whose approved wisdom and virtue they not only entrusted the operations of the combined armament, but voluntarily submitted their more particular concerns; and experience soon justified their prudent choice. Pay was not yet introduced into the Grecian service, because the character of *soldier* was not separated from that of *citizen*. It had been usual, however, to raise annually a certain proportion of supplies among the several confederates, in order to purchase arms, to equip and victual the galleys, and to provide such engines of war as proved requisite in storming the fortified towns belonging to the common enemy²³. By unanimous suffrage, Aristides was appointed to new-model and apply this necessary tax, which had been imposed and exacted by the Spartans without sufficient attention to the respective faculties of the contributaries. The honest Athenian executed this delicate office with no less judgment than equity. The whole annual imposition amounted to four hundred and sixty talents, about ninety thousand pounds sterling; which was proportioned with such nice accuracy, that no state found the smallest reason to complain of partiality or injustice. The common treasure was kept in the central and sacred island of Delos; and, though entrusted to the personal discretion of the Athenian commander, was soon conceived to lie at the disposition of his republic²⁴.

Their
amount.

²³ Plut. in Aristid. p. 532, & seqq.

²⁴ Ibid. p. 534. Thucyd. l. i. c. xcvi. Diodor. p. 440.

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Merit and
persecu-
tion of
Themis-
tocles.

While the merit of Aristides thus procured his countrymen the management of the national treasury of Greece, Themistocles was equally successful in improving the internal resources of the state. By yielding more protection to strangers than they enjoyed in neighbouring cities, he augmented not only the populousness, but the wealth of Athens, as that description of men paid an annual contribution in return for their security²⁵. This, together with other branches of the revenue, he employed in building annually about sixty galleys, the addition of which to the Athenian navy abundantly compensated such losses as were sustained by the accidents of the sea in foreign parts. Notwithstanding the envy and malice of worthless demagogues, who infested the Athenian assembly and courts of justice, Themistocles was fast advancing to the attainment of the same authority at home, which Aristides enjoyed abroad, when complaints arrived from Sparta, that he had conspired with Pausanias to betray the public liberty. The known resentment of the Spartans against this extraordinary man, sufficiently explains the reason why they, who were so dilatory in their proceedings against Pausanias himself, should be so eager to bring to punishment his supposed accomplice. But it is not easy to conceive, how the Athenians could admit such an accusation against a citizen, whose singular valour and conduct had gained the decisive victory at Salamis; whose counsels and address

²⁵ Lyfias adv. Philon.

had fortified their city with impregnable strength; whose foresight and activity had procured them a fleet which no nation in the world could resist; and whose abilities and patriotism had not only saved his country from the most formidable invasion recorded in history, and which was principally directed against Athens, but amidst the terrors of this invasion, the treachery of false friends, and the violence of open enemies, had so eminently contributed to raise his republic to the first rank in the Grecian confederacy. Yet such, on the one hand, was the effect of that envy which, in republics, always accompanies excellence; and such, on the other, the influence of Spartan bribery and intrigues, that Themistocles was banished by the ostracism, a punishment inflicted on men whose aspiring ambition seemed dangerous to freedom, which required not the proof of any particular delinquency, and which had effect only during a term of years ²⁶.

It is probable, that the illustrious exile would have been recalled before the expiration of the appointed time; but the persecution of Sparta allowed not his countrymen leisure to repent of their severity. Having punished Pausanias, they acquainted the Athenians, "That from the papers of that notorious traitor, complete evidence appeared of the guilt of Themistocles; that it was not sufficient, therefore, to have expelled him for a few years from Athens, by an indulgent decree, which the assembly

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His death
and character.
Olymp.
lxxvi. 4.
A. C. 473.

²⁶ Diodor. p. 445, & seqq. Plut. *ibid*.

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might revoke at pleasure; that crimes against the general confederacy of Greece ought to be judged by the Amphiſtyonic council, and puniſhed by death, or perpetual baniſhment.” The Athenians ſhamefully complied with this demand. It appeared, indeed, that Themiſtocles had correſponded with Pauſanias, and been privy to his deſigns; but he perſiſted in affirming that he never had approved them. The rivalſhip and enmity ſubſiſting between Sparta and Argos, had induced him to chooſe the latter as the place of his retreat. There he received the news of his condemnation; after which, not thinking himſelf ſecure in any city of Peloponneſus, he ſailed to Corcyra. But his enemies ſtill continuing to purſue him, he fled to the oppoſite coaſt of Epirus, and ſought refuge among the barbarous Moloffians. Soon afterwards he eſcaped into Perſia, where his wonderful verſatility of genius, in acquiring the language and manners of that country, recommended him to the new king Artaxerxes, who had lately ſucceeded the unfortunate invader of Greece. The ſuſpicion of treaſon throws a dark ſhade on the eminent luſtre of his abilities; nor does the diſinter-eſtedneſs of his private character tend to remove the imputation. Though he carried with him to Perſia his moſt valuable effects, yet the eſtimate of the property which he left behind in Athens, amounted to an hundred talents (above twenty thouſand pounds ſterling), an immense ſum, when eſtimated by the value of money in that age. The whole was conſiſcated to the exchequer; and the eagerneſs of
the

Olymp.
lxxvii. 1.
A.C. 472.

the populace to seize this rich booty, serves to explain the alacrity with which all parties agreed to his destruction. A report prevailed in Greece, that Themistocles could never forgive the ingratitude of the Athenians, which he had determined to revenge at the head of a powerful army, raised by Artaxerxes. But perceiving the unexampled success of Cimon on the Asiatic coast, he despaired of being able to accomplish his design; and, in a melancholy hour, ended his life by poison at the age of sixty-five, in Magnesia, a town of Lydia, which had been bestowed on him by the liberality of the Persian monarch ²⁷.

It is worthy of observation, that the three great commanders who had resisted and disgraced the arms of Xerxes, quitted the scene almost at the same time. While Pausanias and Themistocles suffered the punishment of their real or pretended crimes, Aristides died of old age, universally regretted by the affectionate admiration of his country. He, who had long managed the common treasury of Greece, left not a sufficient sum to defray the expence of his funeral. His son Lyfimachus received a present of three hundred pounds from the public, to enable him to pursue and finish his education. His daughters were maintained and portioned at the expence of the treasury. This honourable poverty well corresponded with the manly elevation of his character, whose pure and unswayed

Death of
Aristides.
Olymp.
lxxvii. 2.
A. C. 471.

His cha-
racter.

²⁷ Plut. & Nepos in Themist. Diodor. l. xi. c. liv—lix. Thucyd. i. 135, & seqq.

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splendour, in the opinion of a good judge of merit ²⁸, far eclipses the doubtful fame of his daring, but unfortunate rival.

Elevation
of Cimon
to the com-
mand.

By the death of Aristides, the conduct of the Persian war devolved on his colleague Cimon, who united the integrity of that great man to the valour of Miltiades and the decisive boldness of Themistocles. But as he felt an ambition for eminence which disdains bare imitation, he not only reflected the most distinguished excellencies of his predecessors, but improved and adorned them by an elegant liberality of manners, an indulgent humanity, and candid condescension; virtues which long secured him the affections of his fellow-citizens, while his military talents and authority, always directed by moderation and justice, maintained an absolute ascendant over the allies of the republic.

He reduces
the coast of
Thrace.
Olymp.
lxxvii. 2.
A.C. 471.

His first operations were employed against the coast of Thrace, which the taking of Byzantium seemed to render an easy conquest. The only places in that country fitted to make an obstinate resistance, were the towns of Eion and Amphipolis, both situate on the river Strymon; the former near its junction with the Strymonic gulph, the latter more remote from the shore, but entirely surrounded by an arm of the gulph, and the principal branches of that copious river. Amphipolis, however, was taken, and planted by a numerous colony of Athenians. But Eion still opposed a vigorous resistance; Boges, the Persian governor, having deter-

²⁸ Plato apud Plutarch. in Aristid.

mined rather to perish than surrender. After long baffling the efforts of the besiegers, by such persevering courage and activity as none of his countrymen had displayed in the course of the war, this fierce Barbarian was at length not tamed, but exasperated by hunger. His companions and attendants, equally desperate with their leader, followed his intrepid example; and mounting the ramparts with one accord, threw into the middle stream of the Strymon their gold, silver, and other precious effects. After thus attesting their implacable hatred to the assailants, they calmly descended, lighted a funeral pile, butchered their wives and children, and again mounting the walls, precipitated themselves with fury into the thickest of the flames ²⁹.

With this signal act of despair ended the Persian dominion over the coast of Europe, which finally submitted to the victorious arms of Cimon; a general, who knew alike how to conquer, and how to use the victory. The Athenians were eager to prolong the authority of a man, who seemed ambitious to acquire wealth by valour, only that by wealth he might purchase the public esteem; and whose affable condescension, and generous liberality, continually increased his fame and his influence both at home and abroad. The reinforcements with which he was speedily furnished by the republic, enabled him to pursue the enemy into Asia, without allowing them time to breathe, or recover strength, after their repeated defeats. The inter-

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Pursues
the enemy
into Asia.
Olymp.
lxxviii. 3.
A.C. 470.

²⁹ Plut. in Cimon. Diodor. l. xi.

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mediate islands ambitiously courted his protection and friendship; and *their* feeble aid, together with the more powerful assistance of the Ionian coast, speedily increased his fleet to the number of three hundred sail.

His rapid
success in
Caria and
Lycia.

With this formidable armament he stretched towards the coast of Caria, where his approach served for the signal of liberty to the numerous Greek cities in that valuable province. Seconded by the ardour of the natives, he successively besieged and reduced the walled towns and fortresses, several of which were filled with powerful garrisons; and, in the course of a few months, totally expelled the Persians from all their strong holds in Caria. The victorious armament then proceeded eastward to Lycia, and received the submission of that extensive coast. The citizens of Phaselis alone, defended by strong walls, and a numerous garrison, refused to admit the Grecian fleet, or to betray their Persian master. Their resistance was the more formidable, because their ancient connection with the Chians, who actually served under the colours of Cimon, enabled them to enter into a treacherous correspondence with the enemy. After other means of intercourse had been cut off, the Chians still shot arrows over the walls, and thus conveyed intelligence into the place of all the measures adopted by the assailants. Wherever the attack was made, the townsmen and garrison were prepared to resist: the besiegers were long baffled in all their attempts; but the perseverance of Cimon finally overcame the obstinacy of his enemies. Their vigorous resistance

He takes
Phaselis.

stance was not distinguished by any memorable punishment; the mediation of the Chians, who were justly esteemed among the best sailors in the Athenian fleet, easily prevailing on the lenity of Cimon to grant them a capitulation, on condition that they immediately paid ten talents, and augmented the Grecian armament by their whole naval strength ³⁰.

The distracted state of Persia, the intrigues of the court, the discord of the palace, and the civil wars which raised to the throne of Xerxes his third son Artaxerxes, distinguished by the epithet of Longimanus, prevented that vast but unwieldy empire from making any vigorous effort to resist the European invasion. But after Artaxerxes had at length crushed the unfortunate ambition of his competitors, and acquired firm possession of the reins of government, which he continued to hold for half a century ³¹, he naturally concerted proper measures to defend his remaining dominions in Asia Minor. Having re-established the Persian authority in the isle of Cyprus, he considered that Pamphylia, being the next province to Lycia, would probably receive a speedy visit from the victorious Greeks. That he might meet them there with becoming vigour, he assembled a powerful army on the fertile banks of the Eurymedon. A fleet likewise, of four hundred sail, was collected,

The Persians prepare for defence:

A. C. 473
—425.

³⁰ Plut. & Diodor. *ibid*.

³¹ Compare Thucyd. l. i. c. cxxxvii. and Usher Chronol. See also Petav. de Doctrin. Temp. l. x. c. xxv. who endeavours to reconcile the chronological differences between Thucydides and Plutarch in Themist.

C H A P. chiefly from Cilicia and Phœnicia, and was com-
 XII. manded to rendezvous near the mouth of that
 river.

Are de-
 feated at
 sea.

Olymp.
 lxxvii. 3.
 A. C. 470.

The Greeks, conducted by the activity of Cimon, delayed not to undertake the enterprize which the prudence of Artaxerxes had foreseen. Their fleet, amounting to two hundred and fifty gallies, fell in with the Persian squadrons off the coast of Cyprus. The Barbarians, vainly confident in their superior numbers, did not decline the engagement, which was obstinate, fierce, and bloody. Many of their ships were sunk; an hundred were taken; the rest fled in disorder towards the shore of Cyprus; but, being speedily pursued by a powerful detachment of the Grecian fleet, were abandoned by the terror of their crews, to the victors; and thus the mighty preparations, which the great king had raised with such flattering hopes, strengthened in one day, with about three hundred sail, the hostile navy of Greece³².

Cimon's
 valour and
 conduct.

The vigorous mind of Cimon, instead of being intoxicated with this flow of prosperity, was less elevated with good fortune, than solicitous to improve it. The captured vessels contained above twenty thousand Persians. The soldiers encamped on the Eurymedon were still ignorant of the battle. These circumstances instantly suggested to the quick discernment of Cimon a stratagem for surprising the Persian camp, which was executed on the evening of the same glorious day with unexam-

³² Thucyd. Plut. Diod. *ibid*.

pled success. The prisoners were stripped of their eastern attire; the bravest of the Greeks condescended to assume the tiara and scymitar, and thus disguised, embarked in the Persian ships, and sailed up the river Eurymedon with a favourable gale. The unsuspecting Barbarians received them with open arms into their camp, as their long-expected companions. But the Greeks had no sooner been admitted within the gates, than on a given signal, at once drawing their swords, they attacked, with the concert of disciplined valour, the defenceless security of their now astonished and trembling adversaries. Before the Persians recovered from their surprise, Cimon had advanced to the tent of their general. Consternation and despair seized this numerous but unwarlike host. The few who were least overcome by the impressions of fear and amazement, betook themselves to flight; a panic terror suspended the powers of the rest; they remained, and fell, unarmed and unresisting, by the hands of an unknown enemy.

Gains the
decisive
victory of
Eurymedon.

The rich spoil of the Barbarian camp rewarded the enterprize and celerity of the Greeks, who, loaded with wealth and glory, returned home during winter, and piously dedicated to Apollo a tenth of the plunder acquired by these ever memorable achievements. A considerable portion of the remainder was employed (as mentioned above) in strengthening the fortifications of Athens. Agreeably to the Grecian custom, the general was entitled to a valuable share. Cimon received it as a testimony of the public esteem, and expended it for the

The spoil
how employed.

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the public use; embellishing his beloved native city with shady walks, gardens, porticoes, schools of exercise, and other works of general pleasure and utility ³³.

The Athenians prosecute the war; Olymp. lxxvii. 4. A. C. 469.

take money instead of ships from the allies;

After these decisive victories, the Greeks, headed by the Athenians, carried on the war during twenty-one years, rather for plunder than glory. The manifest superiority which they enjoyed on all the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, might have rendered their maritime allies sufficiently secure. But the people of Athens, whose councils began about this time to be governed by the magnanimous ambition and profound policy of Pericles, had the address to persuade their confederates that naval preparations and enterprises were still as necessary as ever. At length, however, most of those scattered islands and sea-ports, which followed the colours of Athens, grew weary of perpetual hostilities, of which *they* shared the toil and the danger, while their ambitious leaders alone reaped the advantage and the glory, and became continually more anxious to enjoy the benefits of public peace, and the undisturbed comforts of domestic tranquillity. The Athenians availed themselves of this disposition, to engage such states as appeared most backward in raising their contingents for the common armament, to compound for personal service on shipboard, by an annual supply of money, which might enable Athens continually to keep in readiness a fleet of observation, to watch and check

³³ Idem, *ibid.* & Nepes in Cimon. & Thucyd. l. i.

the motions of the common enemy. This, at first voluntary, contribution soon amounted to about an hundred thousand pounds. It was gradually augmented; and, at length, raised by Pericles to three times the original sum³⁴; an immense income, considering that the proportional value of money to labour was then ten times higher than at present; and considering also the very limited revenues of the greatest monarchs of antiquity; since, from all the various provinces of the Persian empire, scarcely four millions sterling entered the royal treasury³⁵.

In their eastern expeditions, the Greeks had an opportunity of visiting the large and beautiful island of Cyprus, which, though delivered by their valour from *some* Persian garrisons, either still continued, or again became, subject to that empire. The striking advantages³⁶ of a delightful territory, four hundred miles in circumference, producing in great abundance wine, oil, with the most delicious fruits, and deemed invaluable in ancient times on account of its rich mines of brass, naturally tempted the ambition of an enterprising nation. The conquest of Cyprus was still farther recommended to the Athenians, as the sea-coast had been peopled by a Grecian colony under the heroic Teucer, who built there a city called Salamis from the name of

prepare to
undertake
an expedi-
tion a-
gainst Cy-
prus.
Olymp.
lxxvii. 3.
A. C. 466.

³⁴ Thucyd. *ibid.* & Plut. in Pericl.

³⁵ Herodot. iii. 95. In modern times the precious metals have so much increased in quantity and diminished in value, that in 1660 the revenue of Hindoostan amounted to thirty-two millions sterling.

³⁶ Strabo, p. 648.

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his native country³⁷, which, from the earliest antiquity, had been regarded as a dependence of Attica. The Grecian inhabitants of Cyprus had hitherto attained neither power nor splendour; their settlements had been successively reduced by the Phœnicians and the great king; and they actually languished in a condition of the greatest debility³⁸. Honour prompted the Athenians to relieve their distressed brethren; interest incited them to acquire possession of a valuable island. With two hundred ships of war they prepared to undertake this important enterprise, when an object still more dazzling gave a new direction to their arms.

Diverted
from that
measure by
the revolt
of Egypt.
Olymp.
lxxviii. 4.
A. C. 465.

Amidst the troubles which attended the establishment of Artaxerxes on the Persian throne, the Egyptians sought an opportunity to withdraw themselves from the yoke of a nation whose tyranny they had long felt and lamented. A leader only was wanting to head the rebellion. This also was at length discovered in Inarus, a bold Libyan chief, to whose standard the malcontents assembling from all quarters, gradually grew into an army, which attacked and defeated the Persian mercenaries, expelled the garrisons, banished or put to death the governors and officers of the revenue, and traversing the kingdom without controul or resistance, every where proclaimed the Egyptians a free and independent nation. Nor was this the capricious revolt of short-sighted Barbarians. Inarus maintained his conquest with valour and policy; and in

³⁷ Isocrat. in Evagor.

³⁸ Isocrat. *ibid.*

order to strengthen his interest by foreign alliance, dispatched an embassy to Athens, craving the assistance of that victorious republic against its most odious and inveterate enemy ³⁹.

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The negotiation was successful; the Athenians burned with desire to share the spoils of Persia, and commanded the ships, destined for Cyprus, to sail to Egypt. They had scarcely arrived in that kingdom, when a Persian army of three hundred thousand men, commanded by Achæmenes, encamped on the banks of the Nile. A battle speedily ensued, in which the insurgents obtained a complete victory, chiefly through the valour and discipline of their Grecian auxiliaries. The vanquished sought refuge within the walls of Memphis; that capital was invested; and after becoming master of two divisions of the city, the Athenians pushed with vigour the siege of the third, called, from the colour of its fortifications, the White Wall. Artaxerxes, meanwhile, neglected no possible effort, for breaking, or eluding, a tempest, that threatened to dismember his dominions. While Persian nobles of distinction conveyed immense sums of gold and silver into Greece, to rouse, by seasonable bribes, the hostility of rival states against the audacity of Athens, a new army was collected, still more numerous than the former, and entrusted to Megabazus, the bravest general in the East. Such, at least, he was deemed by his countrymen; yet we cannot perceive any very illustrious merit in forcing the Greeks to raise

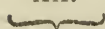
The Athenian armament sails thither; Olvmp. lxxix. 2. A. C. 463.

is victorious;

besieges Memphis.

³⁹ Thucyd. l. i. & Diodor. l. xi. p. 279.

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Misfor-
tunes of
the Athe-
nians in
Egypt.
Olymp.
lxxx. 4.
A.C. 457.

the siege of Memphis, the soldiers being already worn out with the fatigues of hard service, and probably enfeebled by diseases in a far distant climate, extremely different from their own.

Megabazus, however, had the glory of first turning against the Greeks that current of success which had run for many years so strongly in their favour. They and the revolted Egyptians were now besieged, in their turn, in a small island of the Nile called Prosopis, along the coast of which the Athenians had anchored their ships. By diverting the course of the river, Megabazus left them on dry land. This operation so much confounded the Egyptians, that they immediately laid down their arms: but their wonted magnanimity did not forsake the Greeks: with their own hands they set fire to their fleet, and exhorting each other to suffer nothing unworthy of their former fame, determined, with one accord, to resist the assailants, and, although they could not expect victory, to purchase an honourable tomb. Megabazus, intimidated by their countenance and resolution, and unwilling to expose his men to the efforts of a dangerous despair, granted them a capitulation, and, what seems more extraordinary in a Persian commander, allowed them to retire in safety. They endeavoured to penetrate through Libya to the Grecian colonies in Cyrenaica, from which they hoped to be transported by sea to their native country. But the greater part perished through fatigue or disease in the inhospitable deserts of Africa, and only a miserable remnant of men, whose bravery deserved a better fate,

fate, revisited the shores of Greece. To complete the disaster, a reinforcement of sixty ships, which the Athenians had sent to Egypt, was attacked, surrounded, and totally destroyed by the Phœnicians, near the same scene which had already proved so fatal, but so honourable, to their countrymen ⁴⁰.

These repeated misfortunes, together with the growing troubles in Greece, which we shall speedily have occasion to describe, prevented the Athenians, during seven years, from reviving their design against Cyprus. A fleet of two hundred sail was at length entrusted to Cimon, who enjoyed a prosperous voyage to the Cyprian coast. The towns of Malos and Citium opposed a feeble resistance, and the singular humanity with which Cimon treated his prisoners, would have facilitated more important conquests: but the Phœnician and Cilician fleets had again put to sea, and Cimon wisely determined to attack them as they approached the island, rather than wait their arrival, his countrymen being superior to their enemies, still more in naval than in military prowess. In the battle which soon followed, he took above an hundred gallees; the number of those sunk or destroyed is unknown; the remainder fled to the coast of Cilicia, in hopes of protection from the army of Megabazus, encamped in that province; but that slow unwieldy body was unable to afford them any seasonable or effectual relief. The Greeks, having pursued them on shore, totally destroyed *them*, as well as the

The Athenians renewed their designs against Cyprus. Olymp. lxxxii. 3. A. C. 450.

Their success in that island.

⁴⁰ Isocrat. de Pace & Panegyri. & Thucyd. & Diodor. *ibid*.

CHAP. Persian detachments who came to their succour, and returned loaded with spoil to Cyprus. The Athenian general then prepared to form the siege of Salamis, which, though defended by a numerous Persian garrison, and well provided with all the necessaries of defence, must have soon yielded to his skill and valour, had not sickness, in consequence of a wound received before the walls of Citium, prevented him from exerting his usual activity.

The Persian monarch solicits peace. Olymp. lxxxii. 4. A.C. 449.

Motives which determined the Athenians to compliance.

Meanwhile Artaxerxes, who perceived that the acquisition of Salamis would naturally draw after it the conquest of the whole island, and who had been continually disappointed in expecting to prepare fleets and armies capable to contend with the Athenians, eagerly solicited peace from that people, almost on their own terms. His ambassadors were favourably heard in the Athenian assembly by those who were more solicitous about confirming their usurpations over their allies and colonies, than ambitious of extending their Asiatic conquests. Cimon, who invariably maintained the contrary system, was now no more. A peace, therefore, was concluded on the following conditions⁴¹: That all the Greek colonies in Lower Asia should be declared independent of the Persian empire; that the armies of the great king should not approach within three days journey of the western coast; and that no Persian vessel should appear between the Cyanean rocks and the Chelidonian isles, that is, in the wide extent of the *Ægean* and Mediterranean seas, between the northern extremity of the Thracian

⁴¹ Thucydid. Plutarch. Diodor. Isocrat. &c.

Eosphorus and the southern promontory of Lycia. On such terms the Athenians and their allies stipulated to withdraw their armament from Cyprus, and to abstain thenceforward from molesting the territories of the king of Persia ⁴². Such was the conclusion of this memorable war, which, since the burning of Sardis, the first decisive act of hostility, had been carried on, with little intermission, during fifty-one years. The same magnanimous republic, which first ventured to oppose the pretensions of Persia, dictated to that haughty empire the most humiliating conditions of peace; an important and illustrious æra in Grecian history, which was often celebrated with pompous panegyric during the declining ages of Athenian glory.

Although, for reasons which will be explained hereafter, peace was alike necessary to both parties, yet the reader, who feels a warm interest in the cause of civilization and humanity, cannot but regret that, after disgracing the arms of Persia, and breaking the power of Carthage, the Greeks had not combined in one powerful exertion, and extended their victories and their improvements over the ancient world. But the internal defects in her political constitution, which stunted the growth of Greece, and prevented her manhood and maturity from corresponding to the blooming vigour of her youth, rendered impossible this most desirable union, which, could it have taken place, would probably have left little room for the transient conquests of Alexander, or the more permanent glory

Obstacles
to a general or lasting confederacy in Greece.

⁴² Isocrat. Panegyri.

CHAP. of the Roman arms. Instead of these imagined
 XII. trophies, the subsequent history of Greece presents
 us with the melancholy picture of intestine discord.

Its subse-
 quent his-
 tory pecu-
 liarly in-
 teresting.

During an hundred and eleven years, which elapsed between the glorious peace with Persia, in which the Athenians, at the head of their allies, seemed for ever to have repressed the ambition of that aspiring power, and the fatal defeat at Cheronæa, in which the same people, with their unfortunate auxiliaries, submitted to the valour and activity of Philip, Greece, with short variations of domestic quiet and foreign hostility, carried on bloody wars, and obtained destructive victories, in which her own citizens, not the enemies of the confederacy, were the unhappy objects of her inglorious triumph. Yet the transactions of this distracted and miserable period, however immaterial in the history of empire, are peculiarly interesting in the still more instructive history of human nature. A confederacy of soldiers and freemen, extending their dominion over ignorant savages, or effeminate slaves, must continually exhibit the unequal combat of power, courage, and conduct on the one side, against weakness, ignorance, and timidity on the other. But amidst the domestic dissensions of Greece, the advantages of the contending parties were nicely balanced and accurately adjusted. Force was resisted by force, valour opposed by valour, and art encountered or eluded by similar address. The active powers of man, excited by emulation, inflamed by opposition, nourished by interest, and at once strengthened and elevated by
 a sense

a sense of personal honour and the hope of immortal fame, operated in every direction with awakened energy, and were displayed in the boldest exertions of the voice and arm. In every field where glory might be won, men recognised the proper objects of their ambition, and aspired to the highest honours of their kind; and although the prizes were often small, and the victory always indecisive, yet the pertinacious efforts of the combatants (great beyond example, and almost beyond belief) furnish the most interesting spectacle that history can present to the rational wonder of posterity.

The powerful cities of Sparta, Thebes, and Argos, which had long rivalled Athens and each other, could not behold, without much dissatisfaction and anxiety, the rapid growth of a republic which already eclipsed their splendour, and might some time endanger their safety. The Spartans had particular causes of disgust. The immortal victories of Cimon made them deeply regret that *they*, who had shared the first and severest toils of the war, had too hastily withdrawn from a field of action that afforded so many laurels. They were provoked at being denied the command of the maritime allies, and not less offended at being overreached by Themistocles. All these reasons had determined them, above twenty years before the peace with Persia, to make war on the Athenians, expecting to be seconded in this design by the fears of the weak, and the jealousy of the more powerful, states, on both sides the Corinthian isthmus.

Sparta,
Thebes,
and Argos,
hostile to
Athens.

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Earth-
quake in
Sparta;
Olymp.
lxxvii. 4.
A. C. 469.

But their animosity, before it broke out into action, was diverted by a calamity equally sudden and unforeseen. In the year four hundred and sixty-nine before Christ, Sparta was overwhelmed by an earthquake⁴³. Taygetus and the neighbouring mountains were shaken to the foundation, and twenty thousand Lacedæmonian citizens or subjects perished in this dreadful disaster. But, amidst the ruins of Sparta, one description of men beheld the public misfortunes not only without horror, but with a secret satisfaction.

followed
by the re-
volt of the
Helots and
Messenians;

The oppressed Spartan slaves, known by the appellations of Helots and Messenians, assembled in crowds from the villages in which they were cantoned, and took measures for delivering themselves, during the cruelty of the elements, from the not less inexorable cruelty of their unfeeling tyrants. The prudent dispositions of king Archidamus, who, foreseeing the revolt, had summoned the citizens to arms, prevented them from getting immediate possession of the capital; but they rendered themselves masters of the ancient and strong fortress Ithomé, from which they continued many years to infest the Lacedæmonian territories. The Spartans in vain exerted their utmost endeavours to expel this dangerous intestine enemy; and in the third year of the war (for this revolt is dignified in history by the name of the Third Messenian War), they had recourse to the Athenians, who, of all the Greeks, were deemed the most skilful in sieges. The Athenians, either not sufficiently acquainted with the

⁴³ Thucydid. lib. i. cap. c. & seqq. Diodor. lib. xi. cap. lxiii.

secret hostility of Sparta, or willing to dissemble their knowledge of it, as they were then totally bent on other projects and enterprises, sent them the required assistance. The besiegers, however, met with so little success, that the Spartans dismissed their Athenian auxiliaries, on pretence indeed that their help was no longer necessary; but, in reality, from a suspicion that they favoured the interest of the rebels; and, as they retained the troops of all the other allies, the Athenians were justly provoked by this instance of distrust⁴⁴. Meanwhile the inhabitants of Pisa, who, for a reason that will be immediately explained, were highly incensed against Sparta, gave vigorous assistance to the besieged.

The place thus held out ten years: many sallies were made, several battles were fought with the fury that might be expected from the cruelty of tyrants chastising the insolence of slaves. Both parties must have been reduced to extremity, since the Helots and Messenians, though obliged to surrender the place, obtained from the weakness, a condition which they would have vainly solicited from the mercy, of Sparta, “that they should be allowed, with their wives, children, and effects, to depart, unmolested, from the Peloponnesus.” The Athenians, deeply resenting the affront of suspected fidelity, determined to mortify the Spartans by kindly receiving those needy fugitives, whom they finally established in Naupactus, a sea-port on the Crisean gulph, which their arms had justly wrested

part of
whom are
settled in
Naupactus
by the
Athe-
nians.
Olymp.
lxxx. 2.
A. C. 459.

⁴⁴ Thucyd. l. i. cap. ci.

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Their signal gratitude.

from the Locri Ozolæ; a cruel and barbarous people, whose savage manners and rapacity disgraced their Grecian extraction. The Helots and Messenians repaid, by signal gratitude, the humane protection of Athens. During the long course of the Peloponnesian war, while their neighbours on every side espoused the opposite interest, the inhabitants of Naupactus alone invariably exerted themselves, with zeal and vigour, in defence of the declining power of their magnanimous confederate and ancient benefactor.

The war between the Elians and Pisans.

The cause above alluded to, which had incensed the Pisans against Sparta, dated beyond a century⁴⁵. That people had long contended with Elis, the capital of their province, for the right of superintending the Olympic games. The Spartans enabled the Elians to prevail in the contest, who continued, without opposition, to direct that august solemnity, until the earthquake and subsequent calamities of Sparta emboldened the insolent and wealthy Pisans to renew their pretensions⁴⁶. Their attempts, however, to maintain this bold claim, especially after the removal of the Helots and Messenians, appear to have been alike feeble and unfortunate. Pisa was taken, plundered, and so thoroughly demolished, that not a vestige, and scarce the name, remained.

Sack of Pisa.
Olymp. lxxi. 1.
A. C. 456.

The temple of Olympian Jupiter.

With the valuable booty acquired in this warfare, the Elians executed a memorable undertaking; having, in the course of ten years⁴⁷, enlarged and

⁴⁵ Pausanias, l. vi. c. xxii.

⁴⁶ Strabo, l. viii. p. 545.

⁴⁷ Between the years 456 and 446, A. C.

adorned

adorned the temple of Olympian Jupiter, and erected the celebrated statue of that divinity; a work which no subsequent age could ever rival, and whose sublimity is said to have increased and fortified the popular superstition⁴⁸. This famous temple was of the Doric order, encircled with a colonnade, and built of the stone of the country resembling Parian marble. From the area, or ground, to the decoration over the gate, it reached sixty-eight feet in height; it was ninety-five feet broad, and two hundred and thirty long: thus falling short of the greatest modern temples in magnitude, as much as it excelled them in beauty and the richness of material. It was covered with Pentelican marble, cut in the form of brick tiles. At each extremity of the roof stood a gilded vase; in the middle a golden victory; below which was a shield embossed with Medusa's head, likewise of gold. Pelops and Oenomaus were represented, on the pediment, ready to begin the chariot-race before very illustrious spectators, since Jupiter himself was of the number. The vault was adorned with the battle of the Centaurs and Lapithæ. The labours of Hercules distinguished the principal entrance⁴⁹.

After passing the brass gates, you discovered Iphitus crowned by his spouse Echecheiria; from thence you proceeded, through a noble portico, to the majestic creation of Phidias the Athenian, which formed the principal ornament of the tem-

Phidias's
statue of
that divi-
nity.

⁴⁸ Aliquid receptæ religioni adjecisse fertur. PLIN.

⁴⁹ Pausan. in Eliac. p. 303, & seqq.

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ple, and of Greece. The god was sitting on a throne, and being sixty feet high, touched the roof with his head; and threatened, if he moved himself, to shake in pieces that noble edifice, which, lofty and spacious as it was, still appeared unworthy to contain him. This vast colossus was composed of gold, taken in the sack of Pisa, and of ivory, then almost as precious as gold, which was brought from the East by Athenian merchantmen. The god had an enamelled crown of olive on his head, an image of victory in his right hand, a burnished sceptre in his left. His robes and sandals were variegated with golden flowers and animals. The throne was made of ivory and ebony, inlaid with precious stones. The feet which supported it, as well as the fillets which joined them, were adorned with innumerable figures; among which you perceived the Theban children torn by sphynxes, together with Apollo and Diana shooting the beautiful and once flourishing family of Niobé. Upon the most conspicuous part of the throne which met the eye in entering, you beheld eight statues, representing the gymnastic exercises; and the beautiful figure, whose head was encirled with a wreath, resembled young Panarces, the favourite scholar of Phidias, who, in the contest of the boys, had recently gained the Olympic prize. Besides the four feet, mentioned above, the throne was supported by four pillars, placed between them, and painted by Pannæus, the brother of Phidias. There that admirable artist had delineated the Hesperides guarding the golden apples; Atlas painfully sustaining the

the heavens, with Hercules ready to assist him; Salamine with naval ornaments in her hand; and Achilles supporting the beautiful expiring Penthefilea.

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It would be tedious to describe the remaining ornaments of this celebrated statue, and still more of the sacred edifice itself: yet the temple of Olympia was much inferior in size to that of Ceres and Proserpine, at Eleusis, in Attica. The latter was built by Ictinus, the contemporary and rival of Phidias; and sufficiently capacious (could we believe the exaggerations of travellers) to contain thirty thousand persons⁵⁰. This edifice was also of the Doric order; that of Diana at Ephesus, and of Apollo at Miletus, were both of the Ionic; and the celebrated temple of Jupiter at Athens, begun by Pisistratus, and enlarged by Pericles, was finished in the Corinthian style, by Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria. These four temples were the richest and most beautiful in the world, and long regarded as models of the three Grecian orders of architecture⁵¹.

The Olympic temple compared with other sacred edifices in Greece.

While the earthquake and the servile war confined within a domestic sphere the activity of Sparta, Argos, the second republic of the Peloponnesus, and long the most considerable principality in that peninsula, underwent such revolutions and misfortunes, as left her neither inclination nor power to oppose the Athenian greatness. Ever rivals and enemies of Sparta, the Argives had jealously de-

Intestine dissensions in Argolis. Olymp. lxxviii. r. A. C. 468.

⁵⁰ Strabo, l. ix. p. 395.

⁵¹ Vitruvius, l. vii.

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clined the danger and glory of the Persian war, to the success of which their adversaries had so eminently contributed. This ungenerous dereliction passed not unpunished. As deserters of the common cause, the Argives incurred the hatred and contempt of their public-spirited neighbours. Mycenæ, once the proud residence of royal Agamemnon, Epidaurus, and Træzené, which formed respectively the greatest strength and ornament of the Argive territory, threw off the yoke of a capital, whose folly or baseness rendered her unworthy to govern them. Sicyon, Nauplia, Heliæa, and other towns of less note, which were scattered at small distances over the face of that delightful province, obeyed the summons to liberty, and assumed independence. The rebels (for as such they were treated by the indignant magistrates of Argos) strengthened themselves by foreign alliance, and continued thenceforth to disdain the authority of their ancient metropolis and sovereign. At the commencement of the Peloponnesian war, they formed a respectable portion of the Lacedæmonian confederacy; while Argos alone, of all the cities in the Peloponnesus, openly espoused the cause of the Athenians.

Destruction of
Mycenæ.

The ancient city of Mycenæ, which had first founded the trumpet of sedition, was the only victim of Argive resentment. The Argives seized a favourable opportunity, while the allies and adherents of Mycenæ were occupied with their domestic concerns, to lead their whole forces against the place; and having taken it by storm, they decimated

mated the inhabitants, and demolished not only the walls, but the town ⁵² itself, which was never afterwards rebuilt.

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The desultory transactions of so many states and cities as composed the name and nation of Greece, must appear a continual maze of perplexity and confusion, unless we carefully follow the threads which should direct us in this intricate, yet not inextricable, labyrinth. But if we seriously apply ourselves to investigate the hidden causes of events, and to trace revolutions to their source, we shall be surprised by the agreeable discovery, that the history of this celebrated people is not entirely that mass of disorder which it appears on a superficial survey. The same causes which repressed the activity, and humbled the pride of Argos, operated alike fatally on Thebes, the second republic beyond the isthmus, and the only one that ever aspired to rival the power of Athens. The Thebans, for similar, or more odious reasons, than those which had restrained the Argives, had also withheld their assistance in the Persian war; and by this mean selfishness or treachery had justly provoked the indignation of the subordinate cities of Bœotia. Not only Thespiæ and Platæa, which had ever borne with impatience the Theban yoke, but the sea-ports of Aulis, Anthemon, and Larymna; Aschra, the beloved habitation of old Hesiod; Coronea, overshadowed by mount Helicon, a favourite seat of the Muses; Labadea, famous for its oracle of Tro-

The inferior cities in Bœotia reject the authority of Thebes.

⁵² Diodor. l. xi. p. 276.

phonius;

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phonius; Delium and Alalkomené, respectively sacred to Apollo and Minerva, together with Leuctra and Chæronæa, the destined scenes of immortal victories; all these cities successively rejected the jurisdiction and sovereignty of Thebes, which, during the invasion of Xerxes, had so shamefully betrayed the common interest and glory of the nation ⁵³.

The Thebans obtain assistance from Sparta. Olymp. lxxx. 2. A. C. 459.

Wise policy of that state.

Athens enables the Bœotians to maintain their independence.

During several years, the Thebans patiently yielded to a storm, which they found it impossible to resist. But when the Spartans began to breathe after the recovery of Ithomé, and had made a successful expedition against the Phocians, in defence of their kinsmen in Doris, the Thebans warmly solicited them to take part in their domestic quarrels, and to enable them to regain their ascendant in Bœotia; with assurance that they would employ the first moments of returning vigour to oppose the growing pretensions of the Athenians. This proposal was accepted, not only by the resentment, but by the policy, of the Spartan senate, who perceived, that it equally concerned their interest, that the neighbouring city of Argos should lose her jurisdiction over Argolis; and that Thebes, the neighbour and rival of Athens, should recover her authority in Bœotia.

They were applying themselves with vigour and success to effect this salutary purpose, when the active vigilance of Athens dispatched an army, fifteen thousand strong, to maintain the independ-

⁵³ Diodor. l. xi. p. 283, & seqq. & Thucydid. l. i. p. 273.

ence of Bœotia. The valour and conduct of Myronides, the Athenian general, obtained a decisive victory near the walls of Tanagra, one of the few places in the province which had preserved its fidelity to the capital. This memorable battle, which no ancient writer has thought proper to describe, although it is compared to the glorious trophies of Marathon and Plataea⁵⁴, confirmed the liberty of Bœotia; nor could the Thebans, notwithstanding their partial success against several of the revolted cities, recover their authority in that province, until, about fourscore years afterwards, they emerged into sudden splendour under the conduct of their heroic Epaminondas.

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A. C. 458
—456.

The ambitious policy of Pericles, which will be fully explained in the sequel, was eager to profit by every favourable turn of fortune. He took care to place Athenian garrisons in several Bœotian fortresses; he made the neighbouring republics of Corinth and Megara feel and acknowledge the superiority of Athens; and after sending Tolmidas, a commander endued rather with an impetuous than well regulated courage, to ravage the coast of the Peloponnesus, he sailed thither next year in person, and made the Lacedæmonians and their allies deeply regret, that they had too soon discovered their animosity against a republic, alike capable to protect its friends and take vengeance on its enemies. The measures of this daring leader were actually uncontrouled by any opposition, since his eloquence

Ambitious
measures
of Athens.

A. C. 455.

A. C. 454.

⁵⁴ Diodor. l. xi. p. 284.

had

CHAP. XII. had prevailed over the innocence and merit of Cimon, and procured the banishment of that illustrious commander. But Cimon was recalled in two years; and his return was signalised by a suspension of arms in Greece, which that real patriot had been as zealous to promote, as he was ambitious to pursue his Asiatic triumphs. This treaty, however, was soon broke; but an ill-concerted and unfortunate enterprise against Thebes (disapproved by Pericles himself), in which the rash Tolmidas lost his army and his life, made the Athenians again listen to terms of accommodation. They agreed to withdraw their garrisons from Bœotia; to disavow all pretensions against Corinth and Megara, pretensions which had no other effect than to exasperate those little republics against their usurping neighbour; and, on complying with these conditions, the Athenians recovered their citizens made captive in Bœotia, through the misconduct of Tolmidas⁵⁵.

The truce
of thirty
years.
Olymp.
lxxxiii. 4.
A.C. 445.

This was the famous truce of thirty years, concluded in the fourteenth year preceding the Peloponnesian war. The former treaty had been limited to a much shorter period; for it is worthy of observation, that even in their agreements of peace, the Greeks discovered that perpetual propensity to war, which was the unhappy effect of their political institutions⁵⁶.

Motives of
the Athe-
nians for
granting
it.

The terms of this accommodation, seemingly little favourable to the interest of Athens, were

⁵⁵ Diodor. l. xii. p. 293. Thucydid. l. i. p. 71, & seqq.

⁵⁶ Idem, p. 74.

dictated,

dictated, however, rather by the ambition than the equity of that republic; a conclusion that evidently results from examining the third series of events, which (as observed above) completes the history of this memorable period. Amidst the foreign expeditions of Cimon, and the domestic dissensions of Greece, the Athenian arms and policy had been gradually, during thirty years, establishing the sovereignty of the republic over her distant colonies and confederates. This bold undertaking was finally accomplished by Pericles, whose character contributed, more than that of any one man, to the glory and greatness, as well as to the calamities and ruin of his country.

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Between
the years
470 and
440, A. C.

His father Xanthippus, who gained the illustrious victory at Mycalé, rejoiced in a son endued with the happiest natural talents, and an innate love of glory. His youth was entrusted to the learned and virtuous Damon, who concealed, under the uninvincible title of master of rhetoric, the art of animating his pupil with an ambition to deserve the first rank in the republic, as well as of adorning him with the accomplishments most necessary to attain it. From Aristagoras of Clazomené, denominated the philosopher of mind, on account of his continual solicitude to confirm the most important and most pleasing of all doctrines, that a benevolent intelligence presides over the operations of nature, and the events of human life, Pericles early learned to controul the tempest of youthful passions, which so often blast the promising hopes of manhood; to preserve an unshaken constancy in all

Character
of Pericles;

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all the vicissitudes of fortune, since all are the varied dispensations of the same wise providence; and to trample, with generous contempt, on the groveling superstition of the vulgar. Thus qualified by nature and education, he soon displayed, in the Athenian assembly, an eloquence, nourished by the copious spring of philosophy, and ennobled by the manly elevation of his character. His speeches consisted not in the unpremeditated effusions of a temporary enthusiasm; he was the first of his countrymen who, before pronouncing his discourses, committed them to writing⁵⁷: they were studied and composed with the most laborious and patient care; and being polished by repeated touches of correcting art, they rose in admiration, in proportion as they were more closely examined by the piercing eye of criticism; and acquired the epithet of Olympian, to express that permanent and steady lustre which they reflected⁵⁸.

he is suspected of usurpation;

But the superior talents of Pericles, which, in a well-regulated government, would have increased his influence, had well nigh occasioned his ruin in a turbulent and suspicious democracy. The memory of the oldest citizens faithfully recollected, and the envy or fears of the younger readily believed, that the figure, the countenance, and the voice, of the young orator, strongly resembled those of the ambitious and artful Pisistratus, whose specious virtues had subverted the liberty of his country. The alarmed jealousy of freedom, which often

⁵⁷ Suidas.

⁵⁸ Plut. in Pericl.

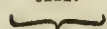
destroyed,

destroyed, in an hour, the authority established slowly, and with much labour, during many meritorious years, might be tempted to punish the imagined tyranny of Pericles; who, to escape the disgrace of the ostracism, shunned the dangerous admiration of the assembly.

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The active vigour of his mind, thus withdrawn from politics, was totally directed to war; and his abilities, alike fitted to excel in every honourable pursuit, and gradually opening with every occasion to display them, carried off the palm of military renown from the most illustrious captains of the age. Cimon alone surpassed him in the object of his victories gained over Barbarians; but Pericles equalled Cimon in valour and conduct. A rivalry in warlike fame was followed by a competition for civil honours. Cimon, who had been introduced on the theatre of public life by the virtuous Aristides, regarded, like that great man, a moderate aristocracy, as the government most conducive to public happiness. The contrary opinion was warmly maintained by Pericles, who found an ostentatious admiration of democracy the best expedient for removing the prejudice excited against him, by his resemblance to Pisistratus, of aspiring, or at least of being capable to aspire, at royal power. On every occasion he defended the privileges of the people against the pretensions of the rich and noble; he embraced not only the interests, but adopted the capricious passions, of the multitude; cherishing their presumption, flattering their vanity, indulging their rapacity, gratify-

he courts
and cor-
rupts the
Athenian
populace;

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encourages
their am-
bitious
pretensions.

ing their taste for pleasure without expence, and fomenting their natural antipathy to the Spartans, who, as the patrons of rigid aristocracy, were peculiarly obnoxious to their resentment.

The condition of the times powerfully conspired with the views and measures of Pericles, since the glory and wealth acquired in the Persian war, procured not only allies and power to the state, but industry and independence to the populace. The son of Xanthippus impelled this natural current, which ran so strongly in favour of both, when he maintained, that the citizens of Athens were entitled to enjoy equal advantages at home, to challenge a just pre-eminence in Greece, and to assume a legal dominion over their distant colonies and confederates.

Means by
which he
subdued
the Athenian
colonies and
allies.
A. C. 470
—440.

These unfortunate communities had unwarily forged their own chains, when they consented to raise an annual subsidy to maintain the guardian navy of Athens. They perceived not, that this temporary benevolence would be soon converted into a perpetual tribute, since, in proportion as they became unaccustomed to war, they laid themselves at the mercy of that republic, to which they had tamely entrusted the care of their defence. When the rigorous exactions of Athens speedily warned them of their error, the wide intervals at which they were separated from each other, rendered it impossible for them to afford mutual assistance, and to act with united vigour. Naxos, Thasos, Ægina, Eubœa, Samos, and other islands or cities of less importance, boldly struggled to
repel

repel usurpation; but fighting singly, were successively subdued; while new, and more grievous, burdens were cruelly imposed on them. The least patient again murmured, petitioned, rebelled, and taking arms to resist oppression, were treated with the severity due to unprovoked sedition. The punishment inflicted on them was uniformly rigorous. They were compelled to deliver up the authors of the revolt, to surrender their shipping, to demolish their walls, or receive an Athenian garrison, to pay the expences of the war, and give hostages for their future obedience⁵⁹. It is not the business of general history to describe more minutely the events of this social war, which was carried on chiefly by Pericles, and finished in the course of thirty years, with every success the most presumptuous ambition of Athens could either expect or desire: Samos, the capital of the island of that name, made the most vigorous resistance; but at length surrendered to Pericles, after a siege of nine months, in the ninth year before the war of Peloponnesus⁶⁰.

Historians, partial or credulous, have handed down some atrocious cruelties committed after the taking of Samos, which may be confidently rejected as fictions, injurious to the fame of Pericles, who, though he approved and animated the aspiring genius of his country, and vainly flattered himself that he could justify, by reasons of state, its most ambitious usurpations, uniformly shewed himself inca-

Spirit of
the Athe-
nian go-
vernment;

⁵⁹ Thucyd. & Diodor. loc. citat.

⁶⁰ Thucyd. l. i. p. 75.

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its excessive
severity to-
wards its
dependencies.

pable of any deliberate wickedness. It may be observed, however, that as the moderate peace with Sparta had been concluded chiefly with a view to allow the Athenians to apply their undivided attention to the affairs of their tributaries, the severities exercised over these unfortunate states were, in consequence of that event, rather increased than mitigated. Athenian magistrates and garrisons were sent to govern and command them. They were burdened with new impositions, and dishonoured by new badges of servitude. The lands, which the labour of their ancestors had cultivated, were seized and appropriated by strangers, who claimed the distinction of Athenian colonies; and all these once independent and flourishing republics were thenceforth compelled to submit their mutual contests, their domestic differences, and even their private litigations, to the cognisance and decision of Athenian assemblies and tribunals ⁶¹. By drawing thus closely the reins of government, Pericles, in the course of ten years, brought into the treasury of Athens the sum of near two millions sterling ⁶². His vigilance seasonably displayed the terrors of the Athenian navy before the most distant enemies or allies of the republic; by alternate pliancy and firmness, by successive promises, bribes, and threats, he repressed the jealous hostility of neighbouring powers; and while his ambition and magnificence fortified and adorned the capital with

⁶¹ Isocrat. de Pace; & Xenoph. de Repub. Athen.

⁶² Thucyd. Diodor. Isocrat. Plut. &c.

external strength and splendour, they also laid the foundations of those internal disorders, which rendered his long administration glorious for his contemporaries, fatal to the succeeding generation, and ever memorable with posterity.

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C H A P. XIII.

Transition to the internal State of Athens.—Laws of Draco—Solon—Pisistratus—Clisthenes—Aristides—Pericles.—Final Settlement of the Athenian Government.—View of the Athenian Empire.—The combined Effect of external Prosperity and democratic Government on Manners—Arts—Luxury.—History of Grecian Literature and Philosophy.—Singular Contrast and Balance of Virtues and Vices.—The sublime Philosophy of Anaxagoras and Socrates.—The unprincipled Captiousness of the Sophists.—The moral Tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides.—The licentious Buffoonery of Aristophanes.—The imitative Arts employed to the noblest Purposes—and abused to the most infamous.—Magnificence of public Festivals.—Simplicity in private Life.—Modest Reserve of Athenian Women.—Voluptuousness, Impudence, and Artifices of the School of Aspasia.

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Transition
to the in-
ternal state
of Athens.

THE taking of Samos closed the long series of Athenian conquests. During the nine subsequent years, that once fortunate people enjoyed and abused the blessings of peace and prosperity. Their ostentatious display of power increased the envy and terror of Greeks and Barbarians, and excited the obstinate and bloody war of twenty-seven years, during which the force of the

whole Grecian nation was exerted to demolish or uphold the stately edifice of empire that had been reared by the ambitious patriotism of Pericles. Assisted by feeble or reluctant allies, Athens long struggled against the combined strength of Peloponnesus, Bœotia, Macedon, Sicily, and Persia; and our curiosity must deservedly be attracted towards the internal resources and moral condition of a people, who, with few natural advantages, could make such memorable and pertinacious efforts, and who, amidst the din of arms, still cultivating and improving their favourite arts, produced those immortal monuments of taste and genius, which, surviving the destruction of their walls, navy, and harbours, have ever attested the glory of Athens, and the impotent vengeance of her enemies. In an inquiry of this kind, the science of government and laws, which gives security to all other sciences, merits the first place in our attention; nor, at this distance of time, will the enlightened reader contemplate with indifference the laws of Athens, which having been incorporated ¹ into the Roman juris-

¹ The Romans sent deputies to Athens, to obtain a copy of Solon's laws, four hundred and fifty-four years before Christ. The benefits derived from these salutary institutions were gratefully acknowledged by the liberal candour of a people, who knew how to appreciate the merit of enemies and subjects. Hear the language of Pliny (l. viii. ep. 24.) to Maximus, who in the reign of Trajan was appointed governor of the province of Achaia, or Greece: "Remember that you go to a country, where letters, politeness, and agriculture itself (if we believe common report), were invented Revere the gods and heroes, the ancient virtue and glory of the nation. Respect even its fables and its vanity; remembering that from Greece we derived our laws. The right of conquest, indeed, hath

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jurisprudence about the middle of the fifth century before Christ, served, after an interval of above sixteen hundred years, to abolish the barbarous practices of the Gothic nations, and to introduce justice, security, and refinement, among the modern inhabitants of Europe ².

Laws and
govern-
ment.

The admirable institutions of the heroic ages were built on religion; which, as we have fully

enabled us to impose our laws on the Greeks; but that people had first given us their laws, at our solicitation, and when they had nothing to fear from the power of our arms. It would be inhuman and barbarous to deprive them of the small remnant of liberty which they still possess."

² Justinian's Pandects, it is well known, were discovered at Amalfi, in Italy, A. D. 1130. In less than half a century afterwards, the civil law was studied and understood in all the great provinces of Europe; and this study (as Mr. Hume observes, Reign of Richard the Third) tended to sharpen the wits of men, to give solidity to their judgment, to improve their taste, and to abolish the barbarous jurisprudence which universally prevailed among the Gothic nations. To this law we owe the abolition of the mode of proof by the ordeal, the corfnet, the duel, and other methods equally ridiculous and absurd. Pecuniary commutations ceased to be admitted for crimes; private revenge was no longer authorised by the magistrate; and the community was made to feel its interest in maintaining the rights, and avenging the wrongs, of all its members. See more in the admirable discourse annexed to the Reign of Richard the Third. I shall add but one observation, in Mr. Hume's own words: "The sensible utility of the Roman law, both to public and private interest, recommended the study of it, at a time when the more exalted and speculative sciences carried no charms with them; and thus the last branch of ancient literature which remained uncorrupted, was happily the first transmitted to the modern world: for it is remarkable, that in the decline of Roman learning, when the philosophers were universally infected with superstition and sophistry, and the poets and historians with barbarism, the lawyers, who, in other countries, are seldom models of science or politeness, were yet able, by the constant study and close imitation of their predecessors, to maintain the same good sense in their decisions and reasonings, and the same purity in their language and expression." Hume's Hist. 3d vol. 8vo, p. 300.

explained

explained above, ascertained and enforced the rights and obligations of public and private life. But the abused authority of priests and oracles, and the natural depravity of man, ever solicitous to obtain the partial favour of his heavenly protectors on easier terms than the faithful discharge of his duty, gradually severed, by fraud or violence, the natural and most salutary union between religion and morality; in consequence of which separation, the former degenerated into an illiberal superstition, and the latter relaxed into licentiousness, or stiffened into pedantry. The striking comparison, or rather contrast, between the genius and character, the virtues and vices, of the Greeks, as variously described by Homer and by Solon, and which is so much to the advantage of the earlier period, must, in the progress of this discourse, naturally present itself to the reflection of the attentive reader, and will set in the clearest point of view the unhappy revolution of manners, which time and accident had produced in the wide interval between the poet and the legislator.

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The very imperfect legislation of Draco³, who flourished thirty years before Solon⁴, proved that the Athenians felt the want of a science, which they knew not how to acquire or cultivate. The austere gravity of that magistrate seems to have imposed on the easy credulity of the multitude; for his ignorance or severity were alike unworthy of the important office with which he was entrusted.

Legislation of
Draco;
Olymp.
xxxix. 1.
A. C. 624.

³ Suidas in voce Draco. Pollux, l. viii. c. vi.

⁴ Meursius, Solon.

He

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He gave laws, which, according to the lively expression of an orator, seemed to be written⁵, not with ink, but with blood; since death or banishment were his ordinary penalties for the most trivial offences, as well as for the most dangerous crimes: and he justified this rigour, by absurdly observing, that the smallest disorders deserved death, and no severer punishment could be inflicted on the greatest. The laws of Draco, therefore, tended only to increase the evils which they were designed to remedy⁶; and no people ever presented a scene of greater confusion and misery, than did the unhappy Athenians, when the abilities and virtues of Solon were seasonably called to their relief.

of Solon.
Olymp.
xlv. 3.
A.C. 594.

In relating the general revolutions of Greece, we had occasion to describe the important services, and illustrious merit, of this extraordinary man, whose disinterestedness, patriotism, and humanity, equalled his military conduct and success. His royal extraction (for he sprang from the race of the Codridæ), his experienced abilities, above all, his approved wisdom and equity, pointed him out for the noblest and most sublime employment of humanity, that of regulating the laws and government of a free people. Such, at least, the Athenians may be considered, when their unanimous suffrage rendered Solon the absolute umpire of their whole constitution and policy; although, prior

State of
Athens in
the time
of Solon.

⁵ The orator Demades, of whom more hereafter. The observation has been always repeated in speaking of Draco, though his laws were certainly written neither with blood nor ink. Even those of Solon were only engraved on tables kept in the citadel.

⁶ Aristot. de Civ. l. ii. & Plut. in Solon.

to this period, they suffered the combined evils of anarchy and oppression⁷. The magistrates plundered the treasury and the temples; and often betrayed, for bribes, the interests of their country. The rich tyrannised over the poor, the poor continually alarmed the safety of the rich. The rapacity of creditors knew no bounds. They compelled the insolvent debtors to cultivate their lands, like cattle; to perform the service of beasts of burden; and to transfer to them their sons and daughters, whom they exported as slaves to foreign countries. Solon, with a laudable vanity, boasts of having recovered and restored to their native rights many of those unhappy men, whose sentiments had been debased, and language corrupted, by the infamy of Barbarian servitude⁸. The wretched populace, deriving courage from despair, had determined no longer to submit to such multiplied rigours; and before the wisdom of the lawgiver interposed, they had taken the resolution to elect and follow some warlike leader, to attack and butcher their oppressors, to establish an equal partition of lands, and to institute a new form of government⁹. But the numerous clients and retainers, who, in a country little acquainted with arts and manufactures, depended on the wealthy proprietors of the lands and mines of Attica, must have rendered this undertaking alike dangerous to both parties; so that both became willing rather to submit their differences to law, than to decide them by the sword.

⁷ Fragm. Solonis apud Demosth. p. 234. edit. Wol.

⁸ Idem, *ibid*.

⁹ Plut. in Solon,

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His regulations
concern-
ing pro-
perty.

New-
models the
govern-
ment.

The impartiality of Solon merited the unlimited confidence of his country. He maintained the ancient division of property, but abolished debts. He established the rate of interest at 12 per cent. at which it afterwards remained; but forbade, that the insolvent debtor should become the slave of his creditor, or be compelled to sell his children into servitude. After these preliminary regulations, which seemed immediately necessary to the public peace, Solon proceeded, with an impartial and steady hand, to new-model the government¹⁰; on this generous, but equitable principle, that the few ought not, as hitherto, to command, and the many to obey; but that the collective body of the people, legally convened in a national assembly, were entitled to decide, by a plurality of voices, the alternatives of peace and war; to contract or dissolve alliances with foreign states; to enjoy

¹⁰ The most correct information concerning the ancient republic of Athens, and the laws of Solon, is contained in Aristot. *Fragm. de Civit. Athen.* and in various parts of his second, fourth, and sixth books of *Politics*. 2. In *Isocrat. Areopagit. Panathen. & Panegy.* And 3. In *Plut. in Vit. Solon.* Xenophon's *Treatise concerning the Athenian republic* relates to later times, when many corruptions had crept in, as will be afterwards explained. It is remarkable, that Polybius, l. vi. has confounded the moderate institutions of Solon with the democratical licentiousness and tyranny introduced by Pericles and his successors in the administration. The palpable errors of so judicious an author prove how little accurate knowledge the Greeks possessed on the subject of their own history; and how impossible it is for a modern writer, who blindly follows such guides, not to fall into innumerable errors and contradictions. The treatise of Aristotle (*de Civitate*) above mentioned, deserves particular attention from those who write or study the history of republics. In it we see the germ, and often more than the germ, of the political works of Machiavel, which Montesquieu has so often copied, without once acknowledging his obligation.

all the branches of legislative or *sovereign* power¹¹; and to elect, approve, and judge the magistrates or ministers entrusted, for a limited time, with the *executive* authority.

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In the actual state of most countries of Europe, such a form of government, as only takes place in some small cantons of Switzerland, would be attended with the inconvenience of withdrawing the citizens too much from their private affairs. But in ancient Greece, and particularly in Attica, the slaves were four times more numerous than the freemen¹²; and of the latter we may compute that little more than one-half were entitled to any share in the sovereignty. Strangers, and all those who could not ascertain their Athenian descent, both in the male and female line, were totally excluded from the assembly and courts of justice. The regulations of Solon marked the utmost attention to preserve the pure blood of Athens unmixed and uncorrupted; nor could any foreigner, whatever merit he might claim with the public, be admitted to the rank of citizen, unless he abandoned for ever his native country, professed the knowledge of some highly useful or ingenious art, and, in both cases,

His institutions suited the condition of the times.

¹¹ The election contained a mixture of chance, since those who were named by the people cast lots to decide on whom the office should be conferred. The same practice prevails in chusing the senators of the republic of Berne. But Solon enacted, that the fortunate candidate should undergo what is called a probation; his character and merits were thus exposed to a second examination; and it seemed scarcely possible, after this severe scrutiny, that any man should attain power, who was altogether unworthy of public confidence.

¹² See my Introductory Discourse to the Orations of Lysias and Isocrates, p. 5, & seqq.

had

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had been chosen by ballot, in a full assembly of six thousand Athenians. These circumstances (especially as the Athenian people were usually convened only four times in thirty-five days) prevented their assemblies from being either so inconvenient and burdensome, or so numerous and tumultuary, as might at first sight be supposed. Yet their numbers, and still more their impetuosity and ignorance, must have proved inconsistent with good government, if Solon had not secured the vessel of the republic from the waves of popular frenzy, by the two firm anchors of the Senate and the Areopagus; tribunals originally of great dignity and of very extensive power, into which men of a certain description only could be received as members.

His division of the citizens.

Solon divided the Athenians into four classes, according to the produce of their estates. The first class consisted of those whose lands annually yielded five hundred measures of liquid, as well as dry commodities; and the minimum of whose yearly income may be calculated at sixty pounds sterling; which is equivalent, if we estimate the relative value of money by the price of labour, and of the things most necessary to life, to about six hundred pounds sterling in the present age¹³. The second class consisted of those whose estates produced three hundred measures; the third, of those whose estates produced two hundred; the fourth, and by far the most numerous class of Athenians, either possessed no landed property, or at least enjoyed not a revenue in land equal to twenty-four

¹³ See Introduction to *Lysias*, &c. p. 14.

pounds sterling, or, agreeably to the above proportion, two hundred and forty pounds of our present currency.

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All ranks of citizens were alike admitted to vote in the public assembly, and to judge in the courts of justice, whether civil or criminal, which were properly so many committees of the assembly¹⁴. But the three first classes were exclusively entitled to sit in the senate, to decide in the Areopagus, or to hold any other office of magistracy. To these dignities they were elected by the free suffrages of the people, to whom they were accountable for their administration, and by whom they might be punished for malversation or negligence, although they derived no emolument from the diligent discharge of their duty.

Prerogatives of the first classes.

The senate of four hundred, which, eighty-six years after its institution, was augmented to five hundred by Clisthenes, enjoyed the important prerogatives of convoking the popular assembly; of previously examining all matters before they came to be decided by the people, which gave them a negative before debate in all public resolutions; and of making laws which had force during a year, without requiring the consent of the populace. Besides this general superintendence and authority,

Of the senate of the 500.

¹⁴ In my Introductory Discourses to the Orations of Lysias, &c. I had occasion to explain the nature of the Athenian tribunals. Since the publication of that work, the same subject, and particularly the form of civil process, has been accurately explained by Sir William Jones, in his Dissertations annexed to the translation of Isæus. Mr. Pettingal's learned work upon the use and practice of *juries* among the ancients, lately fell into my hands. Wherein my ideas and his differ, will easily appear from the text, and needs not be pointed out.

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The senate was exclusively invested with many particular branches of the executive power. The president of that council had the custody of the public archives and treasury. The senate alone built ships; equipped fleets and armies; seized and confined state-criminals; examined and punished several offences, which were not expressly forbidden by any positive law. The weight of such a council, which assembled every day, except festivals, infused a large mixture of aristocracy into the Athenian constitution. This, as we shall immediately explain, was still farther increased by the authority of the Areopagus, a court so named from the place where it was held; a hill sacred to Mars, adjoining to the citadel.

The nine
archons.

The principal magistrates in Athens were the nine archons, the first of whom gave his name to the year, and presided in the civil courts of justice, where a committee of the people, chosen promiscuously from all classes by lot¹⁵, sat as judges and jury; but where it belonged to the archon and his assessors, men appointed by suffrage, and acquainted with forms, to take what in Scotland is called a precognition, to prescribe the form of action, to give the ballot¹⁶, and to receive and declare the

¹⁵ The essential difference between the Roman and Athenian government, consisted in the different placing of the judicial power; which at Rome remained 300 years in the hands of the senate. The seditions of the Gracchi, and most of the civil dissensions which happened before the time of Augustus, had for their object or pretence, the altering of this order of things, and bringing the Roman constitution nearer the Athenian.

¹⁶ *Οἱ τιθέντες τὸν ἀγῶνα καὶ τὴν ἡγοίαν δίδοντες*, are the words of Lysias. The same writer mentions the *παρίδοι, συνδίκαι*, assessors, syndics.

verdict

verdict and sentence of the court. The archon next in dignity, who had the appellation of king, presided in causes respecting religion and things sacred, which formed the object of an important and dangerous branch of Athenian jurisprudence. The archon third in dignity, with his assessors the generals¹⁷, presided in military matters; and the six remaining, who were known by the general appellation of thesmothetæ, heard criminal pleas of various kinds, or rather directed the proceedings of the six courts where criminal causes were examined and determined. These nine archons, or presidents of the several courts of justice, like all other Athenian magistrates, were, at the expiration of their annual office, accountable to the people; and when their conduct, after a severe scrutiny, appeared to merit public approbation and gratitude, they were received, and remained for life, members of the Areopagus, a senate invested with a general inspection over the laws and religion, as well as over the lives and manners of the citizens; and which, in dangerous emergencies, was even entitled to assume a sort of dictatorial power¹⁸.

The Areopagus.

Such is the great outline of the constitution established by Solon, according to which every Athenian citizen enjoyed the inestimable privilege of being judged by his peers, and tried by laws to

Happy tendency of Solon's plan of government.

¹⁷ Lyfias, in the second oration against Alcibiades (a military cause), not only mentions the στρατηγοί, or generals, but addresses them separately from the ἀνδρες δικάσται, or judges.

¹⁸ Isocrat. Oratio Areopagit.

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which he himself had consented. Although the legislative and judicial powers were thus lodged with the people, men of property and ability were alone entrusted with the administration of government; and as power in some measure followed property, the same expedient which served to maintain a due distinction of ranks in society, tended also to promote the industry and frugality of the multitude, that they might thereby become entitled to share those honours and offices, to which persons of a certain estate only could aspire.

Extensive
nature of
his laws.

The laws of Solon were of the most extensive nature, comprehending not only rules of right, but maxims of morality, regulations of commerce, and precepts of agriculture. To describe his institutions respecting such matters as are properly the objects of law, would be explaining those great, but familiar principles, concerning marriage, succession, testaments, the rights of *persons* and of *things*, which, through the medium of the civil law, have been conveyed into the jurisprudence of all the civilised nations of Europe. His laws concerning education and manners prove that drunkenness and unnatural love were the predominant vices of that early age. It was a particular duty of the archons, to prevent or punish offences committed in consequence of intoxication; and the regulations concerning schools²⁹, which were not to be opened till sun-rise, which were ordered to be shut before night, and into which none but such relations of

²⁹ *Æschin. in Timarchum.*

the master, as were particularly specified by law, could on any pretence be admitted, marked the utmost solicitude to root out an evil which already infected and disgraced the manners of Greece.

The education recommended by Solon nearly resembled that above described, which generally prevailed in Greece²⁰. The children of Athenian citizens, when taken from the hands of the women, were delivered to two masters, of whom the one formed the body, and the other the mind. Swimming, and the easier exercises, prepared them for the harder toils of the gymnastic. Reading, and learning by heart the lessons and examples of the poets, made way for the severer studies of eloquence and philosophy. In process of time, music, geometry, and drawing, seem to have entered into the plan of a liberal education²¹. At the age of twenty, the youth of all ranks took an oath in the temple of Agraulos (an appellation of Minerva), to obey and to maintain the laws of their country; to use their best endeavours to promote its prosperity; to follow the standard of whatever commanders might be appointed to conduct them; to sail to every part of the world, when summoned by the public service; to fight to death for their native land; and to regard wheat, barley, vines, and olives, as the only boundaries of Attica²²: a preposterous arrogance in that little republic, which already betrayed an ambition to conquer and appropriate all

His system
of educa-
tion.

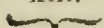
Duties and
employ-
ments of
the youth.

²⁰ See Chapters V. and VI.

²¹ Arist. Polit. I. vii. c. iii.

²² See Introduction to Lyfias, &c. p. 16.

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the cultivated parts of the world. When the Athenian youth were not, in consequence of this oath, engaged in military service, they were obliged by law to follow such employments as suited their respective fortunes. Agriculture, commerce, and mechanic arts, fell to the share of the poor; the rich still continued their application to gymnastic and philosophy, carefully studied the laws of the republic, examined the ancient and actual condition of their own and neighbouring states; and, at the age of thirty, appeared as candidates in the assembly for such offices of trust and honour as their regular manners, inoffensive and dutiful behaviour in all the relations of private life, temperance, œconomy, public spirit, and abilities²³, might obtain from the voluntary suffrage of the people.

Usurpation of
Pisistratus.
A. C. 578.

The usurpation of Pisistratus, though it destroyed for a time the political liberty of Athens, gave stability to most of the laws and forms introduced by Solon. That extraordinary *tyrant*, for so the Greeks styled him, was not more distinguished by the loftiness of his genius than the humanity of his disposition; and had not the violence of contending factions, and the fury of his enemies, inflamed his natural love of power, the name of Pisistratus would stand the foremost in the list of Grecian patriots and heroes. His valour and conduct were signalized in the conquest of Nisæa, Salamis, Naxos, Delos, and Sigæum; and if he displayed boldness and address in acquiring sovereignty, he displayed

²³ I.ysias, passim.

still more moderation and virtue in administering it. He assumed, indeed, the royal dignities of priest and general, and took care that the chief offices of magistracy should be filled by his partisans. But he maintained the regular course of law and justice, not only by his authority, but by his example; having appeared in person to answer an accusation in the Areopagus. He not only enforced the laws of Solon against idleness, but endeavoured to give them more efficacy by introducing new arts and manufactories into Attica. He was the first who brought into that country the complete collection of Homer's poems, which he commanded to be sung at the Panathenæan festival; nor can we suppose that he should have been zealous to diffuse the liberal and manly sentiments of that divine poet, if his government had not resembled the moderation and equity of the heroic ages, rather than the despotism of tyrants.

His son Hipparchus imitated and surpassed the mild virtues of his father; and, amidst the turbulence of the later democracy, it was acknowledged with a sigh by the Athenians, that their ancestors were indeed happy under Solon and Pisistratus, but that the reign of the tyrant Hipparchus brought back on earth the golden days of Saturn. The father had required a tenth part of the produce of Attica, to support his guards, and the other appendages of royalty: his more generous son remitted one-half of this imposition. While he alleviated the burdens, yet encouraged the industry of his subjects, by building the temple of Olympian

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His moderate and wise administration;

surpassed by that of his son Hipparchus.

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Jupiter, he was solicitous to dispel their ignorance and barbarity by erecting pillars in every part of the city, engraved with elegiac verses, containing lessons of wisdom and precepts of morality. He collected the first library in Athens; and his liberal rewards, and still more his agreeable manners and winning affability, attracted to that city the most distinguished poets of the age.

His murder exasperates Hippias.

The murder of Hipparchus exasperated the temper of his brother and successor Hippias; but notwithstanding the calamities which the latter inflicted and suffered, it must be allowed that the government of Pisistratus and his family, which, with various interruptions, lasted sixty-eight years²⁴, increased the strength, and promoted the refinement of Athens²⁵.

The government changed by Clisthenes. Olymp. lxvii. 3. A. C. 510.

Yet in nothing was that usurpation more advantageous than in the animating sense of liberty which the memory of past servitude, under Hippias, excited and kept alive in Athens, after the popular government had been restored by Clisthenes and Alcibiades. We have already had occasion to relate the foreign victories of the republic, which immediately followed that event; but at the same time the constitution of government underwent a considerable change. By admitting to the rank of citizens a promiscuous crowd of strangers, fugitives, Athenians of half blood, and perhaps slaves, the tribes were augmented from four to ten; and

²⁴ Between 578 and 510, B. C.

²⁵ See the treatise of Meursius, entitled *Pisistratus*, one of the few satisfactory performances in the immense collection of Groæovius.

the senators from four to five hundred. The ostracism was likewise established; a law by which any citizen whose influence or abilities seemed dangerous to liberty, might be banished ten years, without the proof or allegation of any positive crime.

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In this condition the republic continued thirty years, until the glorious victories of Salamis, Plataea, and Mycalé, encouraged the lowest but most numerous class of citizens, by whose valour those memorable exploits had been achieved, to make further invasions on the prerogatives of their superiors. The sudden wealth, which the rich spoils of the Barbarians had diffused among all ranks of men, increased the *census* of individuals, and destroyed the balance of the constitution. Aristides, who perceived it to be impossible to resist the natural progress of democracy, seasonably yielded to men who had arms in their hands, and firmness in their hearts; and proposed, with apparent satisfaction, but much secret reluctance²⁶, a law by which the Athenian magistrates should be thenceforth promiscuously elected from the four classes of citizens. This innovation paved the way for the still greater changes begun twenty years afterwards, and gradually completed by Pericles; a revolution of which the consequences were not immediately felt, but which continually became more sensible, and finally terminated in the ruin of Athens and of Greece.

Important
alteration
made by
Aristides.
Olymp.
lxxv. 2.
A. C. 479.

The general reasons which prevailed on the equity and discernment of Pericles to espouse, with

The de-
mocracy
completed

²⁶ Ἐκὼν ἀεχόντι δὲ θυμῷ, cited on this occasion by Plutarch, well expresses the forced generosity of Aristides to the populace.

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by Peri-
cles.

Olymp.
lxxxii. 4.

A.C. 449.

Introduc-
tion of pay
to the
troops;

of fees and
salaries to
the magis-
trates.

undue warmth, the cause of the populace, have in the preceding chapter been sufficiently explained. Yet whatever partial motives of interest and ambition ²⁷ might warp the views of this illustrious statesman, it must be acknowledged, that the foreign transactions and success of the republic, and particularly the new situation in which the Athenians found themselves placed with regard to their distant allies and colonies, might naturally suggest and occasion very important alterations in the Athenian constitution. The ancient and sacred law, which obliged every citizen, without fee or reward, to take arms in defence of his country, could not easily be extended to the obligation of protecting, without a proper recompence, the interest of foreign communities. The scanty population of Attica sufficed not to answer the demands of so many distant expeditions. It became necessary to hire troops wherever they might be found; and, as this necessity introduced pay into the Athenian armies, a similar, though not equally cogent, reason established fees and salaries for all the different orders of judges and magistrates. The same principle of duty and public spirit, which obliged every freeman to fight without pay, likewise obliged him gratuitously to judge, consult, and deliberate, for

²⁷ Plutarch (in Pericle) mentions a particular reason which engaged Pericles to counteract the aristocracy, and to abridge the power of the Areopagus. Although he had been often *named* for the office of archon, the *lot* had never fallen on him; so that he could not be received as a member of that respected court. If this observation be well founded, it shews how little real weight the annual magistracies had at Athens; since Pericles, though he never attained the dignity of archon, governed the republic many years with unrivalled authority.

the benefit of his country. But when the contested interests of foreign, though dependent communities, were agitated and adjusted in the tribunals of Athens, it seemed reasonable for those who spent their time in an employment, to which no natural obligation called them, to demand a proper reward for their useful services. At first, therefore, a *small* sum, but which gradually increased with the power of the people, was regularly distributed among the citizens, for every deliberation which they held, and for every cause which they determined.

The desire of reaping this profit made the populace anxious to draw all causes and deliberations before their own tribunals and assemblies. This design was successfully accomplished by Ephialtes²⁸, an artful and daring demagogue, whom Pericles employed as a proper instrument to effect such invidious measures as were most obnoxious to the rich and noble. While his patron extended the renown of Athens by his foreign victories, and gradually reduced into subjection the colonies and allies of the republic, the obsequious Ephialtes zealously promoted his domestic measures; and by undermining the authority of the senate and of the Areopagus²⁹, the firmest bulwarks of the aristocracy,

These
circum-
stances
totally un-
hinge the
govern-
ment
established
by Solon.

²⁸ Plut. in Pericle.

²⁹ Authors have not described in what particular respects, or by what particular means, Ephialtes effected his purpose: yet we may collect, from obscure hints on this subject, that he not only brought before the inferior tribunals causes hitherto confined to the Areopagus, but took from that court its general inspection and superintendence over the religion and laws; which offices he bestowed on the popular court of the *ἡλιίαι* and the *νομοφύλακες*, who were appointed, and

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crazy, obtained a signal victory over the laws of Solon. The assassination of Ephialtes proved only the weakness of his enemies; and we shall find, in the subsequent history of Athens, that most matters of deliberation came, thenceforth, in the first instance, before the popular assembly; that the wise institutions of Solon were reduced to an empty form; and that the magnanimity of Pericles, the extravagance of his immediate successors, the patriotism of Thrasylbulus and Conon, the integrity of Phocion, the artifices of Æschines, and the eloquence of Demosthenes, successively swayed, at will, a wild and capricious democracy.

External
and do-
mestic
prosperity
of the re-
public.
Olymp.
lxxxv. 1.
A. C. 440.

The revolution which immediately followed, in the manners, character, and conduct of the Athenians, was the natural consequence of the change of government, combined with other circumstances inseparably connected with their domestic and external prosperity. In the course of a few years, the success of Aristides, Cimon, and Pericles, had tripled the revenues, and increased, in a far greater proportion, the dominions of the republic. The Athenian gallies commanded the eastern coasts of the Mediterranean; their merchantmen had engrossed the traffic of the adjacent countries; the

and dismissed, at the will of the people. He likewise rendered the probation for becoming an *Areopagite* less severe than formerly. Persons crept into this order, whose characters disgraced it. The *Areopagites* became equally accessible to presents and to beauty; and their decisions fell into contempt. See the discourse of Isocrates upon reforming the government of Athens, and Athenæus, l. ix. That Ephialtes, or Pericles himself, likewise weakened the authority of the senate (although it is not remarked by any ancient author), appears from all the subsequent history of Athens.

maga-

magazines of Athens abounded with wood, metal, ebony, ivory, and all the materials of the useful as well as of the agreeable arts; they imported the luxuries of Italy, Sicily, Cyprus, Lydia, Pontus, and Peloponnesus; experience had improved their skill in working the silver mines of mount Laurium; they had lately opened the valuable marble veins in mount Pentelicus; the honey of Hymettus was more esteemed, in proportion as it became better known to their neighbours; the culture of their olives (oil being long their staple commodity, and the only production of Attica, which Solon allowed them to export) must have improved with the general improvement of the country in arts and agriculture, especially under the active administration of Pericles, who liberally let loose the public treasure to encourage every species of industry³².

But if that minister promoted the love of action, he found it necessary at least to comply with, if not to excite, the extreme passion for pleasure, which then began to distinguish his countrymen. The people of Athens, successful in every enterprise against their foreign as well as domestic enemies, seemed entitled to reap the fruits of their dangers and victories. For the space of at least twelve years preceding the war of Peloponnesus, their city afforded a perpetual scene of triumph and festivity. Dramatic entertainments, to which they were passionately addicted, were no longer performed in slight

Effect of this, combined with the change of government, on manners and arts.

³² Isocrat. Arcop. de Pace, & Panegyri. Xenoph. & Aristot. de Repub. Athen.

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unadorned edifices, but in stone or marble theatres, erected at great expence, and embellished with the most precious productions of nature and of art. The treasury was opened, not only to supply the decorations of this favourite amusement, but to enable the poorer citizens to enjoy it, without incurring any private expence; and thus, at the cost of the state, or rather of its tributary allies and colonies, to feast and delight their ears and fancy with the combined charms of music and poetry. The pleasure of the eye was peculiarly consulted and gratified in the architecture of the theatres and other ornamental buildings; for as Themistocles had strengthened, Pericles adorned his native city; and unless we had the concurring testimony of antiquity, as well as the immortal remains of the Parthenon, or temple of Minerva, which still excite the admiration of travellers, it would be difficult to believe that in the space of a few years, there could have been created those inestimable wonders of art, those innumerable temples, theatres, statues, altars, baths, gymnasia, and porticoes, which, in the language of ancient panegyric, rendered Athens the eye and light of Greece³¹.

Luxury
and vices
of Athens.

Pericles was blamed for thus decking one favourite city, like a vain, voluptuous harlot, at the expence of plundered provinces³²; but it would have been fortunate for the Athenians if their extorted wealth had not been employed in more perishing, as well as more criminal, luxury. The

³¹ Isocrat. & Aristid. in Panegyri.

³² Plutarch in Pericle.

pomp

pomp of religious solemnities, which were twice as numerous and as costly in Athens as in any other city of Greece; the extravagance of entertainments and banquets, which on such occasions always followed the sacrifices; the increase of private luxury, which naturally accompanied this public profusion, exhausted the resources, without augmenting the glory, of the republic. Instead of the bread, herbs, and simple fare recommended by the laws of Solon, the Athenians, soon after the eightieth Olympiad, availed themselves of their extensive commerce to import the delicacies of distant countries, which were prepared with all the refinements of cookery³³. The wines of Cyprus were cooled with snow in summer; in winter³⁴ the most delightful flowers adorned the tables and persons of the wealthy Athenians. Nor was it sufficient to be crowned with roses, unless they were likewise anointed with the most precious perfumes³⁵. Parasites, dancers, and buffoons, were an usual appendage of every entertainment³⁶. Among the weaker sex, the passion for delicate birds, distinguished by their voice or plumage, was carried to such excess as merited the name of madness³⁷. The bodies of such youths as were not peculiarly addicted to hunting and horses, which began to be a prevailing taste³⁸, were corrupted

³³ Aristoph. *Nubes*, ver. 50. & *Lystrat.* passim.

³⁴ Athen. l. xi. 3. & Xenoph. *Memorabilia*, l. ii.

³⁵ Xenoph. *ibid.*

³⁶ Athenæus, l. i. & Xenoph. *Symp.*

³⁷ Ορνιθομανα, Athen. l. xi. 3.

³⁸ Aristoph. *Nubes*, passim.

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by the commerce of harlots, who had reduced their profession into system³⁹; while their minds were still more polluted by the licentious philosophy of the sophists. It is unnecessary to crowd the picture, since it may be observed, in one word, that the vices and extravagancies, which are supposed to characterise the declining ages of Greece and Rome, took root in Athens during the administration of Pericles, the most splendid and most prosperous in the Grecian annals.

Contrast
and balance of
virtues and
vices, advantages
and disadvantages.

This paradox, for such it must appear, may be explained by considering the singular combination of circumstances, which, in the time of that statesman, gave every poison its antidote, and rendered the partial evils, already described, only the thorn that ever accompanies the rose. The Grecian history of those times affords a more striking contrast than ever appeared in any other age or country, of wisdom and folly, of magnanimity and meanness, of liberty and tyranny, of simplicity and refinement, of austerity and voluptuousness. The sublime philosophy of Anaxagoras and Socrates was accompanied, as with a shadow, by the dark unprincipled captiousness of the sophists; the pathetic and moral strains of Sophocles and Euripides were parodied by the licentious buffoonery of Aristophanes; painting and sculpture, which, under geniuses of the first order like Phidias, served as handmaids to religion and virtue, degenerated under inferior artists into mean hirelings of vice and

³⁹ Alexis apud Athenæum, l. xiii.

disorder;

disorder; the modesty of Athenian matrons was set off as by a foil, when compared with the dissoluteness of the school of Aspasia; and the simple frugality of manners, which commonly prevailed in private families, even of the first distinction, was contrasted with the extravagant dissipation of public entertainments and festivals. To examine the parallel links of this complicated chain will illustrate the character of a people whose subsequent transactions form one principal object of Grecian history.

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Philosophy, which in Greece alone deserves the peculiar attention of the historian, arose about the beginning of the sixth century before Christ, and in an hundred and fifty years attained the highest degree of perfection, and sunk into the lowest degeneracy and corruption, to which the use or abuse of the human intellect could raise or plunge it. Lesser Asia, to which Europe and America owe the inestimable benefits of their religion and letters, produced and nourished the tender plant of philosophy; and the flourishing Greek colonies on that delightful coast, communicated to their mother country this precious offspring of their soil. Thales of Miletus, Pittacus of Mitylene, Bias of Priene, Cleobulus of Lindus in the isle of Rhodes, and the other wise men, as they were emphatically styled, who lived in that age, not only gave advice and assistance to their countrymen in particular emergencies, but restrained their vices by wholesome laws, improved their manners by useful lessons of morality, and extended their knowledge by im-

Parallel
links of
this chain
examined.

History of
Greek phi-
losophy.

The seven
Sages.

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Æsop the
fabulist.

portant and difficult discoveries⁴⁰. But the first attempt towards moral philosophy, as independent on, and unconnected with religion, seems to have been the fables of Æsop, which, to men in an early period of society, must have appeared a very serious and important species of composition. The sphere of history was narrow; the examples of the gods, amidst the continual corruptions of superstition, had become too flagitious for imitation; and men, whose rustic simplicity of life afforded them continual opportunities to observe the instinctive sagacity of certain animals, might derive many useful lessons from those humble instructors. In the early ages of Greece and Rome, and of all other nations whose history is recorded, fables were told, and in some degree believed, in the assembly and senate-house, on the most important occasions; for in the infancy of society men are children; and the delusion, which the belief of a fable supposes, is not more gross and improbable than many of those errors into which (as we have already proved⁴¹) their lively fancy had often hurried them. The same romantic cast of imagination which had animated woods and winds, mountains and rivers, which had changed heroes into gods, and gods into frail men, might endow animals with reason, and even speech.

The gnomonic
poets.

The next step towards moral science was of a more refined and abstract kind, consisting of the

⁴⁰ Plutarch. Sympos. & de Placit. Philosoph. Plato in Protagor. Diogen. Laert. passim.

⁴¹ See above, Chapter II.

sentences

sentences of the gnomonic poets ⁴², and in those detached precepts or proverbs which, in all countries, have preceded any systematic account of morality. Each of the seven sages, as they were called, had his favourite maxims ⁴³, which he engraved in temples and other places of public resort; but at this distance of time it is impossible, amidst the differences of authors, to discover what belongs to each; nor is the search important, since all their maxims or proverbs, whatever efforts of generalization they might cost their inventors, now appear extremely simple and familiar.

These respectable fathers of Grecian philosophy, who silently diffused light through the gloom of a barbarous age, are said to have maintained a correspondence ⁴⁴ with each other, as well as with Solon of Athens, Chilon of Sparta, and Periander of Corinth; men who, in imitation of their eastern brethren, chiefly cultivated such practical knowledge as qualified them to be the legislators, magistrates, and generals of their respective countries.

Thales the Milesian, alone, quitted the ordinary pursuits of civil and military renown; and although he composed verses, promulgated moral sentences, and, on some particular emergencies, gave seasonable advice to his countrymen, yet he established his fame on a basis more broad and

The discoveries of Thales the Milesian.

⁴² See the Sentences of Theognis, which are evidently a collection, not the work of one man.

⁴³ Aristot. Rhet. ii. 21. Stobæus, Sermon. p. 44, &c.

⁴⁴ Plut. Symp.

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permanent than the fluctuating interests of perishing communities. Many of the elementary propositions of geometry, afterwards collected by Euclid, were first discovered ⁴⁵ by Thales, who directed the acuteness of his mind with equal success to astronomy. He divided the heavens into five zones; discovered the equinoxes and solstices; remarked the Ursa Minor; observed, and nearly predicted, eclipses. The division of the year into three hundred and sixty-five days was already known to the Egyptians; but although Thales might borrow this, and perhaps other discoveries, from that ancient people, among whom he sometime resided, it appears, even from those authors who are ever prone to exaggerate the wisdom of Egypt, that he owed much less to that country, than to the native sagacity and penetration of his clear comprehensive mind ⁴⁶.

His school
and suc-
cessors,

Thales founded the Ionic school, in which he was succeeded by Anaximander and Anaximenes, who were followed by Anaxagoras, the instructor of Pericles, and Archelaus, who is called by ancient writers the master of Socrates. About fifty years after Thales, the same speculations which he had introduced were pursued by Xenophanes of Colophon, Leucippus and Parmenides of Elea, and Heraclitus of Ephesus. These ingenious men discovered many useful truths; yet all of them, not

⁴⁵ Proclus in Euclid.

⁴⁶ Hieronym. apud Laert. l. i. c. xxvii. Plin. l. xxxviii. c. xvii.

excepting

excepting Thales himself, likewise busied themselves with subjects that will for ever excite and elude human curiosity. Their doctrines were equally liable to objection, whichever of the elements they assumed as the first principle of nature; they universally agreed in asserting the fallacy of the senses, and the unworthiness of the vulgar superstition; but their various opinions concerning the origin and destruction of worlds, the magnitudes and distances of heavenly bodies, the essence of matter and spirit⁴⁷, deserve only to be considered as the dreams of inquisitive men, whose ambition of knowledge carried them beyond the sphere of experience, and the clear deductions of reason. The system of Leucippus, the most famous of them all, was improved by Democritus of Abdera⁴⁸, and afterwards adopted by Epicurus, whose philosophy is sufficiently explained in the extraordinary work of Lucretius, the boldest monument which the world is ever likely to behold, of learning, genius, and impiety.

degenerate
into athe-
ism.

But it is particularly worthy of observation, that at the same time Democritus assailed the celestial mansions, and unveiled, with a daring hand, the feeble majesty of Grecian superstition, Anaxagoras of Clazomené revealed a new and infinitely more august spectacle, by first announcing to the heathen world, a self-existent, all-perfect mind, as the great

The sub-
lime phi-
losophy of
Anaxago-
ras.

⁴⁷ See Diogen. Laert. l. i. Aristot. Metaph. passim. & Plut. de Placit. Philosoph.

⁴⁸ Laert. l. ix. Aristot. Physic. l. viii.

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cause and author of the material world. Thales and Pythagoras, with such of their disciples as faithfully adhered to their tenets, had indeed admitted spirit as a constituent principle of the universe; but they had so intimately blended mind and matter, that these dissimilar substances seemed to make an indissoluble compound, as the soul and body constitute but one man. According to Anaxagoras, on the other hand, the creating and sovereign intelligence was to be carefully distinguished from the soul of the world, which he seems to have regarded merely as a poetical expression for the laws which the Deity had impressed on his works. The great Ruler of the universe did not animate, but impel matter; he could not be included within its limited and perishing terms; his nature was pure and spiritual, and totally incapable of pollution by any corporeal admixture⁴⁹.

The discovery and diffusion of this luminous and sublime principle, which was naturally followed by an investigation of the moral attributes of the Deity, and the deducing from thence the great duties of morality, might have produced a general and happy revolution in Greece, under the zealous and persevering labours of Socrates and his followers, if the tendency of this divine philosophy had not been counteracted, not only by the gross prejudices of the vulgar, but by the more dangerous refinements of incredulous Sophists.

⁴⁹ Aristot. *Metaphys.* l. i. c. iii. Plato in *Cratylus*, & *Plut.* in *Pericle*.

The same spirit of inquiry, which leads to the discovery of truth, will ever promote the propagation of error; and unfortunately for Greece, in the middle of the fifth century before Christ, errors were propagated, so congenial to the condition of the times, that they could not fail to take deep root, and flourish in a soil which was peculiarly well prepared to receive them. The glorious victories over the Carthaginians and Persians had increased the wealth and security, called forth the invention and industry, but, at the same time, multiplied the wants, and inflamed the passions, of the Greeks. The more powerful cities, and particularly Athens and Syracuse, had attained a pitch of prosperity which exceeded their most sanguine hopes; elated by the bloom of health and the pride of riches, they continually sighed for new and unknown enjoyments, while both individuals and communities were ever ready to listen to such instructors as justified their vices, and taught them to abuse the gifts of fortune.

In this situation of affairs appeared the Sophists⁵⁰, whose name, still familiar in the languages of Europe, pretty faithfully expresses their character. Hippias of Elis, Protagoras of Abdera, Prodicus of Ceos, Gorgias of Leontium, with many inferior names, preserved in the writings of Xenophon, Plato, and Isocrates, started up about the same time, and exhibited a new phenomenon in Greece. The Olympic, and other public assem-

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Its tendency counteracted by the Sophists.

History of
the Sophists.
Olymp.
lxxxv. 1.
A. C. 440.

⁵⁰ Vid. Philostrat. de Vit. Sophist.

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blies, furnished them with an opportunity to display their specious accomplishments to the admiring spectators. They frequented the great cities, particularly Athens, and acquired the friendship of the rich, and the applause of the multitude. They professed the knowledge of every science, and of every art, which they taught publicly, for a stipulated price; and, as they really possessed the art of persuasion, their disciples continually increased among the rich and the voluptuous, the idle and the vain.

Their character and views.

Their influence on philosophy and manners.

Their language was glowing and harmonious, their manners elegant, their life splendid. When it served their interest, and pleased the taste of their hearers, they could paint virtue in the warmest and most alluring colours; but the capricious will of their scholars, whose passions they were ever careful to gratify, served as the only standard of their principles; and engaged them, for the most part, to deck out the barren doctrines of Leucippus and Democritus with the meretricious arts of the rhetorician. Their morality supplied the springs with which Epicurus watered his gardens; and their captious logic furnished the arguments by which Pyrrho attempted to justify his scepticism⁵¹. It would be easy to trace up to the Sophists that quibbling metaphysic, which being embodied in the Greek language, thenceforth adhered too closely to the philosophical writings of that people, and

⁵¹ See the note on the Sophists, in my Translation of Isocrates's Panegyric of Athens, p. 1, & seqq.

which

which totally disfigures many otherwise valuable compositions of antiquity. But our present business is only to remark the destructive effects immediately resulting from their tenets, which, while they undermined, without openly opposing, the ancient and popular superstition, boldly set at defiance all those useful maxims of conduct, and all those salutary discoveries of reason, which, amidst the insolence of the Greek democracies, fomented by prosperity, appeared essentially requisite to restrain the intemperance, injustice, and violence, of individuals and communities.

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In several republics of Greece, the Sophists enjoyed a free career to display their talents, practise their artifices, and to promote their fame and fortune. But in Athens their frauds were detected, and their characters unmasked by Socrates⁵², whose philosophy forms an important æra in the history of the human mind. The son of Sophroniscus was born at Athens, forty years before the commencement of the Peloponnesian war. The smallness of his patrimony, amounting only to three hundred pounds, and his original profession of a statuary⁵³, have encouraged an opinion of the obscurity of his birth, among writers who did not reflect on the narrowness of Athenian fortunes, and who forgot to consider, that as hereditary distinctions were little known or regarded in the Grecian republics,

Opposed
by Socra-
tes.

⁵² To avoid prolixity in the account of Socrates and his philosophy, I cite not particular passages, but give the general result of my reading in Plato and Xenophon.

⁵³ Laert. l. ii. art. Socrat.

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a solid and permanent lustre was naturally derived from the practice of ingenious arts, which could not be cultivated, as in ancient Rome, and sometimes in modern Europe, by servile or mercenary hands, but only by the first class of freemen and citizens. Whatever reputation or advantage Socrates might have acquired by the exercise of a profession, which was peculiarly encouraged by the taste of the times, and the magnificent spirit of Pericles, he readily sacrificed to the natural bent of his mind, which concealed, under an external form worthy to represent the voluptuous Silenus ⁵⁴, the fruitful seeds of every amiable and manly sentiment, and determined him, by an irresistible impulse, to the study of wisdom and virtue.

His education and character.

In his early youth he heard the physics of Archelaus, and learned the geometry of Theodorus ⁵⁵; and from these, and other teachers, acquired such an acquaintance with the fashionable theories concerning the formation of the universe, the original principles of things, the hidden powers of matter, as enabled him to regard with just contempt, and occasionally to deride with inimitable humour, the vanity of those useless and shadowy speculations. He acknowledged with the pious Anaxagoras, the superintending mind, whose providence regulated the operations of nature, as well as the affairs of human life. He denied not the existence of those inferior intelligences, which formed the only ob-

⁵⁴ Plato & Xenoph. in Symp.

⁵⁵ Plato in Theætet. & in Menon.

jects of popular adoration ; he allowed the divine origin of dreams and omens ; he was exemplary in all the religious duties of his country ; and were we to judge the Athenian sage by the standard of ordinary men, we should be inclined to believe that he had not entirely escaped the contagion of superstition ; since he professed to be accompanied by a dæmon, or invisible conductor, who often restrained his passions, and influenced his behaviour ⁵⁶. If this assertion was not an effect of that refined *irony* familiar to Socrates, we must allow his temper to have been tinged with credulity : yet, whoever seriously reflects on a life of seventy years, spent in the service of mankind, uniformly blameless, and terminated by a voluntary death, in obedience to the unjust laws of his country ; whoever considers attentively the habitual temperance, the unshaken probity, the active usefulness, the diffusive benevolence, the constant equanimity and cheerfulness of this singular man, will admit a degree of enthusiasm, rather as the ornament, than defect, of such an extraordinary character. Men of learning and genius, who, examining the matter still more deeply, have observed the important revolution produced by the life and death of Socrates, on the principles and sentiments of his contemporaries, and of posterity, are disposed to believe that such an extraordinary phænomenon could not have appeared in the moral world, without the particular interposition of heaven. The cheerful serenity of his last

⁵⁶ Plut. de Genio Socratis.

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XIII. of his active virtue, justified the hardest maxims
 of Lycurgus and Pythagoras; while the main aim
 of his speculations was to establish the sublime morality
 of those sages on the clearest deductions of reason
 and experience.

His philosophy. From the perfections of the supreme intelligence
 he deduced his just government of the universe,
 which implied the immortality of the human soul.
 But the great object of his research was to discover
 the general laws by which, even in this life, the
 superintending providence had variously dispensed
 to men good and evil, happiness and misery. These
 laws he regarded as the promulgated will of the
 God, with which, when clearly ascertained, it be-
 came our duty invariably to comply; since no-
 thing but the most short-sighted folly could risk in-
 curreing the divine displeasure, in order to avoid
 pain or poverty, sickness or death; far less to ac-
 quire perishing gratifications, which leave a sting
 behind them. Reasoning on such principles, and
 taking experience only for his guide, he deduced,
 with admirable perspicuity, the interests and duties
 of nations and individuals, in all the complicated
 relations of society. The actions of men furnished
 the materials, their instruction formed the object,
 their happiness was the end of his discourse.
 Wherever his lessons might be most generally use-
 ful, there he was always to be found; frequenting,
 at an early hour, the Academy, Lyceum, and other

⁵⁷ This subject will be treated hereafter.

public *Gymnasia*; punctually attending the forum at mid-day, the hour of full assembly; and in the evening joining, without the affectation of austerity, in the convivial entertainments of his friends, or accompanying them in the delightful walks which adorned the banks of the Ilyssus. As a husband, a father, a citizen, and a soldier, the steady practice of his duty continually illustrated his doctrines. The conversation and example of this truly practical philosopher (and this is his highest panegyric) persuaded many of his fellow-citizens sincerely to embrace a virtuous course of life; and even those who, like Critias and Alcibiades, allowed the current of their passions to prevail over the conviction of their sober hours, were still charmed with the wonderful extent, as well as the singular accuracy, of his various knowledge; with the acuteness and penetration of his arguments; the beauty, vivacity, and persuasiveness of his style; which, whether he assumed the tone of reason or of ridicule, surpassed whatever had been deemed most eloquent⁵⁸.

Its influence.

Yet, how great soever might be the personal influence of Socrates, the triumph of his philosophy became more illustrious and complete, after his principles were embraced by those who cultivated the imitative arts, and directed the public amusements, which in all countries, but particularly in Greece, have ever produced immediate and powerful effects on the national opinions and character. In Greece alone, the theatre was regarded as an

Assisted by
the tragic
poets;

⁵⁸ Xenoph. Memor. l. iv. c. xv. Laert. l. ii. c. xix. & seqq. & Cicero de Orat. iii. 16.

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particular-
ly Euripi-
des;

who per-
fected the
chorus.

object of the first importance and magnitude; it formed an essential, and by far the most splendid, part of religious worship; the expence of supporting it exceeded that of the army and navy together; and this celebrated entertainment, which united the tragedy and opera of the moderns, was carried to perfection by a favourite disciple of Socrates, whose works were so universally admired in Greece, that (as we shall have occasion to relate in the Sicilian war) the Syracusans released from captivity those Athenians, and those only, who had learned to repeat the verses of Euripides. This admired poet rendered the Grecian tragedy complete, by perfecting the chorus⁵⁹, the principal distinction between the ancient and the modern drama, and which, when properly conducted, rendered the former more regular, yet more varied; more magnificent, and at the same time more affecting; above all, more interesting and more instructive.

From the prevailing manners of the times, when the principal citizens lived together in crowds, and daily frequented the public halls, the *gymnasia*, the

⁵⁹ In this part of the drama, the philosophy of Euripides excels the loftiness of Æschylus, and the richness of Sophocles. It is sufficient to compare the works of the three rivals, to perceive that the chorus in Euripides most faithfully answers the description of Horace:

Ille bonis faveatque, & consilietur amicis,
Et regat iratos, & amet peccare timentes.
Ille dapes laudet mensæ brevis, ille salubrem
Justitiam, legesque, & apertis otia portis;
Ille tegat commissâ; deosque precetur & oret,
Ut redeat miseris, abeat fortuna superbis.

forums,

forums, and temples, it was natural to expect that the action of a Grecian tragedy should consist in some great public event, which interested the whole body of the people. The scene was usually the portico of a temple, the gate of a palace, the wide expanse of a forum, or market-place. In such places many spectators must be supposed present, who would naturally take part in an action which concerned the public interest and happiness⁶⁰. On this principle was introduced the ancient chorus, consisting of such persons as most properly suited the occasion, and who, though not immediately or principally concerned in the catastrophe, had such general and indirect interest, as kept them continually on the scene, and made them approve or condemn, promote or oppose, the sentiments and measures of the actors. The chorus, never quitting the stage, necessarily introduced the unity of place; and as their songs and dances between the acts expressed the feelings excited by the representation, they connected the preceding act with that which immediately followed it, and rendered the whole spectacle uninterrupted and continuous.

⁶⁰ In the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, the chorus is composed of priests, senators, Theban youths, &c. Creon says to Oedipus,

Εἰ τῶνδε χρεῖς πησιάζοντων κλυεῖν
Ἐταῖμος εἰπεῖν, εἴτε καὶ σείχειν ἐσώ.

The answer is,

Ες παντὰς αὐδᾷ τῶνδε γὰρ πλεον φέρω
Πείθος ἢ καὶ τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς περὶ.

CREON. Shall I speak in presence of this numerous assembly? or shall we retire?

OEDIPUS. Speak before all present; for the public distress afflicts me more than my own danger.

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The music of the chorus was more rich and various, and the poetry more elevated and glowing, than what could be admitted into the acts, or ordinary dialogue, which was confined to the iambic measure; circumstances which, together with the numbers, the dresses, the dances, and gestures, of these fancied spectators, equally increased the magnificence and variety of the entertainment. They likewise rendered it more affecting; since nothing is more proper to interest us in any scene, than the beholding a great number of persons deeply engaged by it, and expressing their feelings by natural tones and movements. But the principal advantage of the chorus was to furnish the poet with an opportunity (without loading the dialogue, and rendering it too sententious) of enforcing, by all the power of fancy and of numbers, that moral instruction, which was occasionally attempted by Æschylus and Sophocles, but which forms the continual end and aim of Euripides, who had a soul to feel, and a genius to express, whatever is most lovely and most excellent in sentiment and character. It is unnecessary to mention the affecting delicacy of Admetus and his attendants towards his guest Hercules; the lively emotions of gratitude in that hero; the friendship of Pylades and Orestes; the amiable picture of conjugal affection in the character of Alcestis; since the whole remains of that inestimable writer prove his unceasing labours to warm his countrymen with all the virtues and charities that adorn private life, as well as to keep alive an ardent love of the republic, and a generous passion for its glory

and liberty; while, in several passages, he describes and refutes the philosophy of Epicurus⁶¹ (which, as we have already observed, was chiefly borrowed from the licentious maxims of the Sophists) with such fulness and accuracy as entitled him to the appellation of the Philosophic Tragedian.

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That Euripides, though ten years older than Socrates, owed the characteristic excellencies of his works to the conversation and friendship of that unrivalled moralist, is universally acknowledged by antiquity⁶²; though the character and intentions

His views counteracted by the authors of the old comedy.

⁶¹ See particularly *Alcest.* ver. 782, &c. and ver. 960, &c.

Euripides flourished near an hundred years before Epicurus and Zeno, the respective founders of the Epicurean and Stoical philosophy. Yet we find the tenets of both sects in the tragedian; which may be easily explained, by considering that those opposite kinds of philosophy arose from different aspects of nature, which must often present themselves to an observing eye; and as the doctrines of the Sophists laid the foundation for the moral system of Epicurus, so the moderate doubt of Socrates, and the old academy, was corrupted into different degrees of scepticism, according to the fancy of their successors; and his rational preference of virtue to all other objects, degenerated into a pretended contempt for these objects, as things totally indifferent, the insensibility and pedantry of the Stoics.

⁶² *Εδοκει συμποισιν Ευριπιδῇ.* Diogen. Laert. in Vit. Socrat. The comic poets, who envied and hated Euripides, as the darling of the public, pretended that Socrates had even composed all the finest passages in his tragedies. Soon after the representation of the *Troes*, Mnesilochus parodied it in a farce, which he called *Φρυγες*, Phrygians, probably to have an opportunity of playing on the word *φρυγανον*, fuel.

*Φρυγεις εἰς κωνον δραμα τῶτ' Ευριπιδῆ
Ὡ και Σωκρατες τα φρυγανα υποτιθησι.*

“The Phrygians is a new play of Euripides, to whom Socrates furnishes the fuel.” But the pun cannot be translated. The same Mnesilochus calls Euripides a sort of hammerman to Socrates,

Ευριπιδῆς Σωκρατογομφευσ.

both

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both of the poet and the philosopher were grossly misrepresented by some of their contemporaries. Before the commencement, and during the continuance of the Peloponnesian war, there flourished at Athens a class of men who were the declared enemies, not only of Socrates and his disciples, but of all order and decency. The reader will easily perceive, that I allude to Aristophanes, and the other writers of the old licentious comedy; an entertainment which was never carried to the same vicious excess in any other age or country. Yet this hideous spectre was the sister of Tragedy, whose angelic sweetness and dignity were long accompanied by this odious and disgusting form; but to understand the natural connection between objects seemingly so different, it is necessary to remount to their source.

History of
that licen-
tious
entertain-
ment.

Tragedy, the song of the goat⁶³, and Comedy, the song of the village, sufficiently indicate, by the meanness of their ancient names, the humility of their first original. They arose amidst the sacrifices and joyous festivity of the vintage, in a country which seldom adopted the amusements, any more than the arts and institutions, of others, but which was destined to communicate her own to all

⁶³ A goat, as the particular enemy of the vine, was very properly sacrificed to Bacchus, whose praises composed the song. In the *Antigoné* of Sophocles, v. 1127,

Πολύαινος Καδμείας

Νυμφῶς ἀγαλμα, καὶ Διὸς

Βαρυθρεμετα γένος, &c.

we have a specimen of what formed the first business of tragedy.

the civilized portion of mankind. During the entertainments of a season peculiarly dedicated to recreation and pleasure, the susceptible minds of the Greeks naturally yielded to two propensities congenial to men in such circumstances, a disposition to exercise their sensibility, and a desire to amuse their fancy. Availing himself of the former, the sublime genius of Æschylus⁶⁴ improved the song of the goat into a regular dramatic poem, agreeing with the Iliad and Odyssey in those unalterable rules of design and execution which are essential to the perfection of every literary performance, yet differing from those immortal archetypes of art, in a circumstance naturally suggested by the occasion for which tragedies were composed. It had been usual with the Athenians, when they celebrated in the spring and autumn the great festivals of Bacchus, to personate the exploits and fables handed down by immemorial tradition concerning that bountiful divinity; this imitation was considered as a mark of gratitude due to the beneficence of the god, to whose honours they associated the kindred worship of Pan, Silenus, and their attendant fawns and satyrs. When Æschylus repre-

⁶⁴ Æschylus is said by Aristotle (de Arte Poetica) to have introduced interlocutors, dialogue, &c. which is acknowledging him the father of tragedy. We know little of Thespis, but from Horace :

Ignotum tragicæ genus invenisse camænæ
Dicitur, & plaustris vexisse poemata Thespis.

The plaustrum, however, has a more direct reference to comedy; since λαλεῖν ὡς ἐξ ἀμαξίας, to speak as from a cart, was a common Greek expression for reviling with gross indecent insolence.

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fented, therefore, instead of simply reciting, the real history, or agreeable fictions, of antiquity, he only adopted a mode of imitation already practised in the religious ceremonies of his country; a mode of imitation more powerful than the epic, since, instead of barely describing the deeds of gods and heroes, it shews those distinguished personages on the scene, makes them speak and act for themselves, and thus approaching nearer to reality, is still more forcible and affecting.

Its characteristics, as distinguished from tragedy;

As tragedy was introduced in imitation of the more serious spectacles of the Dionysian festival, so comedy, which soon followed it, was owing to the more light and ludicrous parts of that solemnity⁶⁵. Tragedy is the imitation of an important and serious action, adapted to affect the sensibility of the spectators, and to gratify their natural propensity to fear, to weep, and to wonder. Comedy is the imitation of a light and ludicrous action, adapted to amuse the fancy, and to gratify the natural disposition of men to laughter and merriment. Terror and pity have in all ages been regarded as the main springs of tragedy, because the laws of sen-

⁶⁵ Horace is authentic, and the most agreeable authority:

Agricolæ prisce, fortes, parvoque beati
 Condita post frumenta, levantes tempore festo
 Corpus, & ipsum animum spe finis dura ferentem,
 Cum sociis operum, pueris, & conjuge fidâ,
 Tellurem porco, Silvanum lacte piabant,
 Floribus & vino Genium, memorem brevis ævi.
 Fescennina per hunc invec̃ta licentia morem
 Versibus alternis opprobria rustica fudit, &c. &c.

and still more directly, *Ars Poetic.* v. 220, &c.

sibility,

sibility, founded solely in nature, are always the same. Comedy has been infinitely varied by the innumerable modes of wit, humour, and ridicule, which prevail in different ages and countries, and which agree scarcely in any one particular, unless it may be reckoned an agreement, that men have seldom indulged them, except at the expence of their good-nature, and often of their virtue. The Grecian comedy was uncommonly licentious; the profligate characters of Aristophanes and his contemporaries, Mnesilochus, Callias, Eupolis, and Cratinus, contributed, doubtless, to this deformity; yet these poets could not easily have rendered their new entertainment agreeable to the taste⁶⁶ and prejudices of the public, without incorporating in them the substance of the *phallic* songs⁶⁷, which constituted an ancient and essential part of the amusements of the vintage. The fond admirers of antiquity have defended the abominable strains of these licentious poets, by pretending, that their intention was to reform vice, not to recommend it; an apology which, if admitted, might tend to exculpate the writers, but could never justify their performances, since it is known by experience, that

⁶⁶ Horace has expressed, with his usual felicity, the situation of the spectators, and the fatal necessity of humouring it:

—— Asper

Incolumi gravitate jocus tentavit; eo quod

Illecebris erat & grata novitate morandus.

Spectator, functusque sacris, & potus & exlex.

⁶⁷ Φαλλος. Priapus ξυλον επιμηκες εχων εν τω ακρω σκυτινον αιδοιον. Suidas. This was carried in procession, accompanied with the φαλλικα ασματα.

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lewd descriptions prove a poison rather than a remedy; and instead of correcting manners, tend only to corrupt them.

and from
modern
comedy.

Besides the general licentiousness of the ancient comedy, its more particular characteristics resulted from the peculiar circumstances of the Athenians, during the time of its introduction and continuance. The people of all ranks at Athens were then too deeply engaged in the military and political transactions of their country, to enjoy any amusement which did not either directly flatter their passions, or bear an immediate relation to the great and important interests of the republic. It was during the confusion and calamities of the Peloponnesian war, that all the comic pieces which remain were originally represented; a period too disorderly and tumultuous to relish comedies, such as are now written, or such as were composed in Greece by Menander, in an age of greater moderation and tranquillity. The elegant and ingenious, the moral and instructive strains of Moliere or Menander, may amuse the idleness of wealth, and the security of peace. But amidst the fermentation of war and danger, amidst civil dissensions and foreign invasions, the minds of men are too little at ease to enjoy such refined and delicate beauties, which then appear lifeless and insipid. In such turbulent circumstances, the reluctant attention must be excited by real, instead of imaginary characters; by a true, instead of a fictitious event; by direct and particular advice concerning the actual state of their affairs, instead of vague or abstract lessons of wisdom

dom and virtue. Coarse buffoonery may often force them to laugh; delicate ridicule will seldom engage them to smile; they may be affected by the sharpness of personal invective, but will remain impenetrable to the shafts of general satire.

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By combining the different parts of this description, we may form a tolerably exact notion of the writings of Aristophanes, which commonly conceal, under a thin allegorical veil, the recent history of some public transaction, or the principal features of some distinguished character, represented in such a ludicrous light, as reflects on those concerned, unexpected, and often unmerited, but not therefore the less striking, flashes of insolent ridicule. Such was the nature, and such the materials of the ancient comedy, which, in its form, agreed entirely with tragedy, having borrowed from this entertainment (which was already in possession of the theatre) the distribution of the whole, as well as the arrangement of the several parts; the music, the chorus, the dresses, decorations, and machinery; all of which were so modified and burlesqued as suited the purposes of the comic writer, and often rendered his pieces little else than parodies of the more fashionable tragedies of the times.

General
notion of
the pieces
of Aristophanes.

This singular species of drama, which, in its less perfect state, had long strolled the villages of Attica, was simply tolerated at Athens, until the profusion of Pericles, and his complaisance for the populace, first supplied from the exchequer the necessary expences for the representation of comedies, and proposed prizes for the comic, as well as for

He and his
associates
encouraged
at
Athens by
Pericles.

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the tragic, poets and actors. But, by this injudicious encouragement, he unwarily cherished a serpent in his bosom. Aristophanes and his licentious contemporaries having previously ridiculed virtue and genius, in the persons of Socrates and Euripides, boldly proceeded to avail themselves of the natural malignity of the vulgar, and their envy against whatever is elevated and illustrious, to traduce and calumniate Pericles himself; and though his successors in the administration justly merited (as we shall have occasion to relate) the severest lashes of their invective, yet, had their characters been more pure, they would have been equally exposed to the unprovoked satire of those insolent buffoons, who gratified the gross appetites of the vulgar, by an undistinguished mass of ridicule, involving vice and virtue, things profane and sacred, men and gods.

The Grecian festivals;

Dramatic entertainments formed an essential part of the festivals consecrated to the bountiful author of the vine. Minerva, who had given not only the olive, but what was deemed far more valuable, her peculiar protection to the city of Athens, was rewarded with innumerable solemnities. Jupiter enjoyed his appropriated honours; but more commonly, as is attested by Athenian medals, the worship of the father of the gods was associated with that of his wife and warlike daughter. We shall have occasion to speak more particularly of the festival and mysteries of Ceres, who taught the Athenians the important knowledge of agriculture, which they were supposed to have diffused over the
ancient

ancient world. It would be endless to mention the institutions in honour of the crowd of inferior or less propitious divinities, which rendered the festivals at Athens twice more numerous than in any other Grecian city. Nor did their frequency abate any thing of the expensive splendour which accompanied them. The shops and courts of justice were shut; the mechanic quitted his tools; the husbandman ceased from his labours, the mourner intermitted his sorrow. The whole city was dissolved in feasting and jollity; the intervals of which were filled up by pompous shows and processions, by concerts of music, by exhibitions of painting; and at several festivals, particularly the Panathenæan, by hearing and judging the noblest productions of eloquence and poetry⁶⁸. We shall have occasion to mention some particular ceremonies of a more melancholy cast; but the general character of the Grecian religion was as cheerful and attractive, as the superstition of the Egyptians, from whom they are ignorantly supposed to have borrowed it, was gloomy and forbidding. Even the Egyptian hymns consisted in dismal complaints and lamentations⁶⁹; the Grecian solemnities concluded with songs of joy and exultation. The feasts which followed the sacrifices were enriched by all the delicacies and luxuries of the ancient world; and, to use the words of Aristotle, many persons thought it their duty, at those religious entertainments, to get drunk in honour of the gods⁷⁰.

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the splendour with which they were celebrated.

⁶⁸ Isocrat. Panegy. & Panathen.

⁶⁹ Apuleius de Genio Socratis.

⁷⁰ Aristot. Ethic. ad Nichom. l. viii. c. iii.

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Manners
of the
Athenians
in private
life.

It seems extraordinary, that the revenues of Athens, notwithstanding their improvement by Pericles, should have sufficed for this multitude of expences. But we must consider, that the general simplicity of manners in private life, formed a striking contrast with the extravagance of public festivals and amusements. The houses and tables of the most wealthy Athenians were little distinguished above those of their poorest neighbours. Pericles himself, though never suspected of avarice, lived with the exactest œconomy; and the superabundance of private wealth, which would have created envy and danger to the owner, if he had employed it for his particular convenience and pleasure, procured him public gratitude and esteem, when expended for the satisfaction of the multitude.

Condition
of the fe-
male sex.

For reasons which will immediately appear, we have not hitherto found it necessary to describe the manners and influence of the Grecian women; but the character and condition of the fair sex will throw light on the preceding observations in this chapter, and present the most striking contrast of any to be met with in history. If we knew not the consideration in which women were anciently held in Greece, and the advantages which they enjoyed at Sparta, after the laws of Lycurgus had revived the institutions of the heroic ages⁷¹, we should be apt to suspect that the ungenerous treatment of the feebler sex, which afterwards so universally prevailed, had been derived from the

⁷¹ Aristot. Politic. l. ii. p. 105.

Egyptian and Asiatic colonies, which early settled in that part of Europe. Excluded from social intercourse, which nature had fitted them to adorn, the Grecian women were rigorously confined to the most retired apartments of the family, and employed in the meanest offices of domestic œconomy. It was thought indecent for them to venture abroad, unless to attend a procession, to accompany a funeral ⁷², or to assist at certain other religious solemnities. Even on these occasions, their behaviour was attentively watched, and often malignantly interpreted. The most innocent freedom was construed into a breach of decorum; and their reputation, once sullied by the slightest imprudence, could never afterwards be retrieved. If such unreasonable severities had proceeded from that absurd jealousy which sometimes accompanies a violent love, and of which a certain degree is nearly connected with the delicacy of passion between the sexes, the condition of the Grecian women, though little less miserable, would have been far less contemptible. But the Greeks were utter strangers to that refinement of sentiment ⁷³, which, in the ages of chivalry, and which still, in some southern countries of Europe, renders women the objects of a suspicious, but respectful passion, and leads men to gratify their vanity at the expence of their freedom. Married or unmarried, the Grecian females were kept in equal restraint; no pains were taken to render them, at any one period of their lives, agreeable members of society; and their education was

⁷² Lyfias, p. 420.⁷³ Idem, p. 435.

either

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either entirely neglected, or confined at least to such humble objects, as, instead of elevating and enlarging the mind, tended only to narrow and to debase it. Though neither qualified for holding an honourable rank in society, nor permitted to enjoy the company of their nearest friends and relations, they were thought capable of superintending or performing the drudgery of domestic labour, of acting as stewards for their husbands, and thus relieving them from a multiplicity of little cares, which seemed unworthy their attention, and unsuitable to their dignity. The whole burden of such mercenary cares being imposed on the women, their first instructions and treatment were adapted to that lowly rank, beyond which they could never afterwards aspire⁷⁴. Nothing was allowed to divert their minds from those servile occupations in which it was intended that their whole lives should be spent; no liberal idea was presented to their imagination, that might raise them above the ignoble arts in which they were ever destined to labour; the smallest familiarity with strangers was deemed a dangerous offence; and any intimacy or connection beyond the walls of their own family, a heinous crime; since it might engage them to embezzle the household furniture and effects committed to their care and custody. Even the laws of Athens confirmed this miserable degradation of women, holding the security of the husband's property a matter of greater importance

⁷⁴ Xenoph. Memorab. l. v. passim, particularly Socrates's Discourse with Ischomachus.

than

than defending the wife's person from outrage, and protecting her character from infamy⁷⁵. By such illiberal institutions were the most amiable part of the human species insulted, among a people in other respects the most improved of all antiquity. They were totally debarred from those refined arts and entertainments, to which their agreeable qualities might have added a new charm. Instead of directing the taste, and enlivening the pleasures of society; their value was estimated, like that of the ignoblest objects, merely by profit or utility. Their chief virtue was reserve, and their point of honour, œconomy.

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The extreme depression of women levelled the natural inequalities of their temper and disposition; the prude, the coquette, with the various intermediate shades of female character, disappeared; and all the modest and virtuous part of the sex (if virtue and modesty can ever be the effects of restraint) were reduced to humble imitation and insipid uniformity. But, in the time of Pericles, there appeared and flourished at Athens a bolder class of females, who divested themselves of the natural modesty, disdained the artificial virtues, and avenged the violated privileges of their sex. Asia, the mother of voluptuousness, produced this dangerous brood, whose meretricious arts and occupations met with no check or restraint from the laxity of Ionian morals, and were even promoted and encouraged by the corruptions of Pagan superstition.

Grecian
courtezans;

⁷⁵ See the laws quoted by Lysias, explained in my Introductory Discourse to that orator, p. 100.

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Their arti-
fices and
influence.

In most of the Greek colonies of Asia, temples were erected to the *earthly* Venus; where courtezans were not merely tolerated, but honoured, as priestesses of that condescending divinity⁷⁶. The wealthy and commercial city of Corinth first imported this innovation from the East; and such is the extravagance of the human mind, that after the repulse of Xerxes, the magistrates of that republic ascribed the safety of their country to the powerful intercession of the votaries of Venus, whose portraits they caused to be painted at the public expence, as the Athenians had done those of the warriors who gained the battle of Marathon⁷⁷. The fame of all those accomplished, but mercenary beauties, though highly celebrated by the poets and historians of the times, was eclipsed by the splendour of Aspasia of Miletus, who settled at Athens under the administration of Pericles, and is said to have embarked in the fleet with which that fortunate commander subdued the powerful and wealthy island of Samos. The personal character of Aspasia gave temporary lustre to a profession, which, though exalted by the casual caprices of superstition, must naturally have fallen into contempt; since later writers among the Greeks⁷⁸ acknowledge, that though she carried on a very dishonourable commerce in female virtue, yet her wit and eloquence, still more than her beauty, gained her extraordinary consideration among all ranks in the republic. The susceptible

⁷⁶ Athenæus, l. xiii. & Plutarch, p. 637.

⁷⁷ Simonides apud Athen. l. xiii.

⁷⁸ Plutarch. in Pericle.

minds

minds of the Athenians were delighted with what their absurd institutions rendered a novelty, the beholding the native graces of the sex, embellished by education. Aspasia is said to have acquired a powerful ascendant over Pericles himself; she certainly acquired his protection and friendship; which is less extraordinary than that her conversation and company should have pleased the discernment of the sage Socrates. She is accused (as we shall afterwards have an opportunity to mention) of having excited, from motives of personal resentment, the war of Peloponnesus; yet, calamitous as that long and obstinate conflict proved to Greece, and particularly to Athens, it may be suspected that Aspasia occasioned still more incurable evils to both. Her example, and still more her instructions, formed a school at Athens, by which her dangerous profession was reduced into system. The companions of Aspasia served as models for painting and statuary, and themes for poetry and panegyric. Nor were they merely the objects, but the authors of many literary works, in which they established rules for the behaviour of their lovers, particularly at table; and explained the art of gaining the heart, and captivating the affections⁷⁹; which would have been an imprudence, had they not considered, that the mysteries of *their* calling alone lose little by being disclosed, since men may often perceive the snare, without having courage to avoid it. The dress, behaviour, and artifices of this class of women, became continually more se-

⁷⁹ Athenæus, *ibid.*

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ductive and dangerous ; and Athens thenceforth remained the chief school of vice and pleasure, as well as of literature and philosophy.

It has been already hinted, that the fine arts, and particularly painting, were prostituted to the honour of harlots, and the purposes of voluptuousness. Licentious pictures are mentioned by ancient writers as a general source of corruption, and considered as the first ambush that beset the safety of youth and innocence⁸⁰. Yet this unhappy effect of the arts was only the vapour that accompanies the sun ; since painting, architecture, and above all, statuary, attained their meridian splendour in the age of Pericles ; and shed peculiar glory on this period of Athenian history, not only by the powers of genius which they displayed, but by the noble purposes to which they were directed. But the arts of design form so important a subject, that they merit to be examined apart, in the following chapter.

⁸⁰ Euripid. in Hippolyt.

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History of the Arts of Design.—Superiority of the Greeks in those Arts.—Causes of that Superiority—Among the Asiatic Greeks—Who communicated their Inventions to Europe.—Bathycles the Magnesian—Dipenus and Scillis—Imitated in Greece, Italy, and Sicily.—The Athenians surpass their Masters.—Sublime Style of Art.—Works of Phidias, Polygnotus, &c.—Characteristic Excellence of Grecian Art.—Different Impressions made by Painters and Poets—Depended on the Nature of their respective Arts.

THAT the history of arts has been less cultivated than that of arms and politics, is a general and just complaint, to which writers will seldom be inclined to pay regard, because they will always find it an easier task to relate wars and negotiations, debates and battles, than to describe the gradual and almost imperceptible progress of genius and taste, in works of elegance and beauty.

The origin of the imitative ¹ arts (so congenial is imitation to man) reaches beyond the limits of

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History of
the arts of
design.

¹ Concerning the arts of the Greeks, the most copious materials are furnished by Pausanias throughout; and by the 34th and 35th books of Pliny. The best modern guides are Winckelman and Lessing in German, and Caylus in French. Many important errors of Winckelman are detected by the learned professor Heine, in his *Antiquarische Abhandlungen*.

profane

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profane history ; and to dispute who were their inventors, is only to examine what nation is the most ancient. In this respect, the Egyptians and Phœnicians merit, doubtless, the pre-eminence. From the earliest ages of Heathen antiquity, both these nations seem to have cultivated the arts of design. In the remotest periods of their history, the Egyptians engraved on precious stones, and strove to render their public transactions immortal, by recording them in hieroglyphics, on the hardest bazaltes ; nor can we sufficiently admire the perfection to which the patience of that laborious people had carried the mechanical part of sculpture, before the Persian conquest, and the reign of Cambyfes. But beauty, the essence and the end of art, was never studied by the natives of either Phœnicia or Egypt, who faithfully copied their national features, without attempting to improve them ; until the traces of Grecian conquest and colonization appeared in the medals of the Ptolemies, particularly those with the head of Jupiter Ammon.

Superiority of the Greeks in those arts.

Allowance, doubtless, must be made for the prejudices of national vanity, when Euripides, Aristotle, and Epicurus, endeavour to persuade us, that the clear skies and happy temperature of Greece engendered a peculiar aptitude for arts, letters, and philosophy. The testimony, however, of modern travellers confirms the evidence of antiquity, that the shores and islands of the Archipelago produce more elegant and liberal forms, and features more animated and expressive, with fewer individual imperfections, and more of general nature,

nature, than can be found in any other divisions of the world². Yet whatever the Greeks owed to their skies and climate, they were probably not less indebted to their active laborious education and way of life, and to the manly spirit of their religious, civil, and military institutions. Long before the invasion of Xerxes, the Grecian sculpture was distinguished by an air of majesty peculiar to itself³; and the awful images of the gods, as yet rudely finished, displayed a grandeur and sublimity of expression, that delighted and astonished the best judges, in the most refined ages of art⁴.

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This singularity might be expected from the description already given of the religion and manners of Greece, and from the inimitable excellence of its poets. The divinities of Greece being imagined of the human form, though incomparably more noble and perfect, artists would naturally begin, at a very early period⁵, to exalt and generalise their conceptions. The bold enthusiasm of poetry served to elevate and support their flight, and the native country of Homer was the first scene of their success, the happy climate of Ionia rendering frequent and *natural*, in that delightful region,

Causes of
that superiority,

² Belon. Observat. l. ii. 34.

³ Pausan. Corinth. l. ii. 34.

⁴ Plato & Aristot. passim.

⁵ We omit the fabulous accounts of Dedalus the Athenian, who is said to have flourished in the time of Hercules and Theseus, and forty years before the Trojan war. It has been already proved that, during the heroic ages, the Greeks paid no adoration to statues. Athenian writers, who lived a thousand years after that period, might easily confound the supposed works of the ancient Dedalus with those of Dedalus of Sicily, especially since the error was extremely flattering to their national vanity.

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those beautiful and lovely forms which are elsewhere merely *ideal*, while other circumstances concurred to accelerate the progress of invention and genius in that highly-favoured country.

among the
Asiatic
Greeks;

In the eighth century before the Christian æra, the Asiatic colonies, as we already had occasion to explain, far surpassed their mother-country in splendour and prosperity. For this pre-eminence, they were indebted to the superior fertility of their soil, the number and convenience of their harbours, the advantages of their situation and climate, the vicinity of the most wealthy and refined nations in Asia; above all, to their persevering diligence and ingenuity, by which they not only improved and ennobled the arts derived from the Lydians and Phrygians, but invented others long peculiar to themselves, particularly painting, sculpture in marble, together with the Doric and Ionic orders of architecture.

who communicated
their inventions to
Europe.

In the seventh century before Christ, the magnificent presents which the far-famed oracle of Apollo received from the superstition or vanity of the Lydian kings, were the productions, not of Egyptian or Phœnician, but of Ionian artists; and, during both that and the following century, the Ionians diffused the elegant inventions of their country through the dominions of their ancestors in Europe. Alarmed by the inroads of the Cimmerians, and disturbed by the continual hostility of Lydia, many Eastern artists sought refuge in the commercial cities of Ægina, Sicyon, and Corinth, where the peaceful spirit of the inhabitants, comparatively

paratively wealthy and luxurious, afforded the Ionian artists both encouragement and security.

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The Asiatic fugitives, however, did not confine themselves to these secondary republics. Bathycles, a native of Ionian Magnesia, a place early celebrated for painting⁶, fixed his abode in Sparta, the most considerable community in Greece. By order of the magistrates of that illustrious republic, he made the throne of Amyclæan Apollo, the statue of Diana Leucophryné, the figures of the Graces and Horæ, and all the other gifts and ornaments inclosed within the consecrated ground surrounding the temple of Amyclæ. The statue of Apollo, thirty cubits high, seemed to be the work of an ignorant sculptor, and probably was the production of a far earlier age than that of Bathycles. But whoever considers the colossæan bulk of the principal figure, the base of which was formed into an altar, containing the tomb of Hyacinth, must admire the proportional magnitude of his throne, both sides of which were adorned with sculpture⁷. Among these ornaments, many subjects of history

Bathycles,
the Mag-
nesian.

The throne
of Amy-
clæan
Apollo.

⁶ Plin. l. xxxv. I call it Ionian Magnesia, to distinguish it from other places of the same name. Vid. Plin. edit. Berolin. tom. i. p. 167. & tom. iii. p. 136. 139. & 255.

⁷ Winkelmänn, who scarcely mentions the throne of Amyclæan Apollo, though undoubtedly the greatest ancient monument in Greece, confounds Bathycles the Magnesian, with a later artist of the same name, who made the celebrated cup which the seven sages modestly sent one to the other, as most worthy of such a present, and which was finally consecrated to Delphian Apollo. Diogenes Laertius, speaking on this subject, says, *Βαθυκλῆα τῶν Ἀρκάδων*; and that he was an Arcadian appears also from Plut. in Solon. & Casaubon, ad Athenæum, l. xi. 4.

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or fable are mentioned by Pausanias, which bear no known relation to Apollo or Hyacinth, to Bathycles or the Spartans; but the top of the throne contained a chorus of Magnesians, supposed to represent the artists who assisted in the execution of this stupendous work. The altar represented a celestial group, Minerva, Venus, Diana, and several other divinities, conveying Hyacinth to the skies. Its sides were adorned with the combat of Tyndareus and Eurytus; the exploits of Castor and Pollux; and the extraordinary scene between Menelaus and the Egyptian Proteus, as described in the *Odyssey*⁸. Nor was this the only subject copied from the divine bard. It was easy to distinguish his favourite Demodocus singing among a chorus of Phæacians; a circumstance confirming our observations in a former part of this work, that the poems of Homer were generally known in Sparta long before they had been collected by the Athenian tyrant Pisistratus.

Dipenus
and Scillis.

Almost six centuries before the Christian æra, the Cretans, Dipenus and Scillis, adorned many Grecian cities in Europe as well as in Asia; and about fifty years afterward, the Chians, Bupalus and Anthermus, diffused over Greece those precious works in Parian marble, which were highly admired in the age of Augustus⁹. About the same time, Polydorus of Samos, who seems to have been much employed by Cræsus, the last king of Lydia, made the famous ring for the

⁸ Pausan. Lacon. p. 196, & seqq.

⁹ Vid. Plin. l. xxxvi. § 4.

Samian tyrant Polycrates, which is extolled by Pliny¹⁰ as a master-piece of art.

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The productions of those Eastern artists were imitated with successful emulation by their disciples in ancient Greece, and likewise by the Grecian colonies in Italy and Sicily; as sufficiently appears from the medals of those last-mentioned countries.

Their
works imi-
tated in
Greece,
Italy, and
Sicily.

These more durable monuments, however, can afford but an imperfect idea of the innumerable statues which were formed of tuf or gravel stone¹¹, and of various kinds of wood. The most esteemed were made of ivory, which, like the teeth of other animals, calcines under ground; an unfortunate circumstance for the arts, since, before the invasion of Xerxes, Greece could boast an hundred ivory statues of the gods, all of a colossean magnitude, and many of them covered with gold¹². The white marbles of Paros, together with those of Cyprus and Ægina, furnished the chief materials for sculpture, before the Athenians opened the hard sparkling veins of mount Pentelicus. Ebony, cypress, and other materials, were gradually brought into use, in consequence of the more general diffusion of the art, which was destined not only to represent gods and heroes, but to commemorate the useful merit of illustrious citizens¹³. At the four sacred festivals common to the Grecian name, the victors in the gymnastic exercises, as well as in the musical and poetical entertainments, were frequently distinguished by the honour of a statue. The scenes of

¹⁰ L. xxxvii. § 4.

¹¹ Plut. in Vit. Andoc.

¹² Pausanias.

¹³ Lucian. Imagin.

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those admired solemnities thus became the principal repositories of sculpture; and the cities of Delphi and Olympia, in particular, long surpassed the rest of Greece in the number and value of their statues, as well as in the splendour and magnificence of all their other ornaments ¹⁴.

The Athenians surpass their masters.

But the time approached when those cities themselves were to be eclipsed by the lustre of Athens, which, in the course of forty years, became the seat not only of opulence, power, and politics, but of literature, philosophy, and the fine arts, and thenceforth continued to be regarded as the sovereign of Greece, rather than as the capital of the narrow and unfruitful territory of Attica. During that memorable period, the Athenians, whose circumstances had hitherto proved little favourable to the progress of taste and elegance, acquired unrivalled power and renown. Having disgraced the arms, they plundered the wealth of Persia. Their valour gave them possession of those maritime provinces of Lower Asia, which were justly regarded as the cradle of the arts. Their magnanimity and firmness commanded respect abroad, and ensured pre-eminence in Greece; while, by a rare felicity, their republic, amidst this uninterrupted flow of external prosperity, produced men capable to improve the gifts of valour or fortune to the solid and permanent glory of their country.

Athenian artists,

It is difficult to determine whether the discerning encouragement of Pericles was more useful in

¹⁴ Pausanias Phocic. and Eliac.

animating the industry of Phidias, or the genius of Phidias in seconding the views of his illustrious protector. Their congenial minds seemed as happily formed for each other, as both were admirably adapted to the flourishing circumstances of their country. In the language of Plutarch ¹⁵, this great *minister*, whose virtues gradually rendered him the *master* of the republic, found Athens well furnished with marble, brass, ivory, gold, ebony, and cypress, together with all the other materials fitted to adorn a city, which, having raised to the glory of empire, he wished likewise to render the model of elegance. According to the popular principles which he professed, he deemed it the duty of a statesman to provide not merely for the army, the navy, the judges, and others immediately employed in the public service; the great body of the people he regarded as the constant and most important object of his ministerial care. The immense revenues of the state, which had hitherto been chiefly squandered in shows and festivals, in gaudy ostentation and perishing luxury, he directed to objects more solid and durable, which, while they embellished the city, might exercise the industry and display the talents of the citizens. Guided by such motives, he boldly opened the treasury, and expended about four thousand talents; a sum which then might command as much labour as six or seven millions sterling in the present age. By this liberal encouragement, he animated every art, excited every hand,

conspire
with the
views of
Pericles.

¹⁵ Plut. in Pericle.

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enlivened every exertion, and called forth into the public service the whole dexterity, skill, and genius of his countrymen; while the motives of gain or glory which he proposed, allured from all quarters the most ingenious strangers, who readily transported their talents to Athens, as to the best market, and most conspicuous theatre.

Sublime
style of
art,

But it was the peculiar felicity of Pericles, to find Athens provided not only in all the materials of art, but in artists capable of employing them to the best advantage. In the inaccurate, but often expressive, language of Pliny, sculpture and painting then first arose, under the plastic hands of Phidias and his brother Panæus. Both arts, however, are known to have flourished at an earlier period; but in the age of Pericles, they assumed more elevation and majesty. The inventive genius of man tried a new and nobler flight. The superiority of Phidias and his contemporaries obscured, and almost obliterated, the memory of their predecessors, and produced that sublime style of art, which, having flourished about an hundred and fifty years, decayed with the glory of Greece, and disappeared soon after the reign of Alexander.

compared
with that
preceding
it.

It appears from the gems and medals, and the few remains in marble, preceding the age of Pericles, that the mechanical part of engraving and sculpture had already attained a high degree of perfection. In many of those works, the minutest ornaments are finished with care, the muscles are boldly pronounced, the outline is faithful; but the design has more hardness than energy, the attitudes are

are too constrained to be graceful, and the strength of the expression distorts, and for the most part destroys, beauty. The sculptors Phidias, Polycletus, Scopas, Alcamenes, and Myron, together with the contemporary painters, Panæus, Zeuxis, and Parrhasius, softened the asperities of their predecessors¹⁶, rendered their contours more natural and flowing, and by employing greater address to conceal the mechanism of their art, displayed superior skill to the judgment, and afforded higher delight to the fancy, in proportion as less care and labour appeared visible to the eye. In the works of those admired artists, the expression was skilfully diffused through every part, without disturbing the harmony of the whole. Pain and sorrow were rather concentrated in the soul than displayed on the countenance; and even the more turbulent passions of indignation, anger, and resentment, were so tempered and ennobled, that the indications of them became consistent with the sublimest grace and beauty. But the triumph of art consisted in representing and recommending the social affections; for, setting aside the unwarranted assertions of Pliny, in his pretended epochs of painting, it appears from much higher authority, that as early as the age of Socrates, painters had discerned and attained that admired excellence of style, which has been called in modern times the manner of Raphael; and had learned to express, by the outward air, attitude, and features, whatever (in the words of

¹⁶ Plut. in Pericl. & Quintilian, l. xii. c. x. p. 578.

C H A P. Xenophon¹⁷) is most engaging, affectionate, sweet,
 XIV. attractive, and amiable, in the inward sentiments
 and character. Of these Grecian paintings, indeed, which were chiefly on wood, and other perishing materials, no vestige remains; but the statuary of that celebrated age, while it displays its own excellence, is sufficient to redeem from oblivion (as far at least as invention, expression, and ideal beauty, are concerned) the obliterated charms of the sister art.

The works
 of Phidias.
 Olymp.
 lxxxiii. 4.
 A. C. 445.

In statuary, the superior merit of Phidias was acknowledged by the unanimous admiration of independent and rival communities. Intrusted by Pericles with the superintendence of the public works, his own hands added to them their last and most valuable ornaments. Before he was called to this honourable employment, his statues had adorned the most celebrated temples of Greece. His Olympian Jupiter we had already occasion to describe. In the awful temple of Delphi, strangers admired his bronze statues of Apollo and Diana. He likewise made for the Delphians a groupe of twelve Grecian heroes, surrounding a figure of brass, that represented the Trojan horse. His admired statue of the goddess Nemesis, or Vengeance, was formed from a block of marble, which the vain confidence of the Persians transported to Marathon for a trophy of victory, but which their disgraceful and precipitate flight left for a monument of their cowardice on the Marathonian shore. The grateful piety of Greece adored his Venus Urania, and Parthenopean Apollo. His three Minervas were

¹⁷ See the conversation of Socrates with the painter Parrhasius, in Memorab. l. iii.

respectively made for the Pallenians, Platæans, and Lemnians, and all three presented by those tributary states to their Athenian protectors and sovereigns. These inimitable works silenced the voice of envy. The most distinguished artists of Greece, sculptors, painters, and architects, were ambitious to receive the directions, and to second the labours, of Phidias, which were uninterruptedly employed, during fifteen years, in the embellishment of his native city.

A. C. 455
—430.

During that short period he completed the Odeum, or theatre of music; the Parthenon, or temple of Minerva; the Propylæa or vestibule, and porticoes belonging to the citadel, together with the sculptured and picturesque ornaments of these and other immortal works; which, when new (as Plutarch finely observes), expressed the mellowed beauties of time and maturity, and when old, still preserved the fresh charms and alluring graces of novelty. The Parthenon, which still remains, attests the justice of this panegyric. It is two hundred and seventeen feet nine inches long, composed of beautiful white marble, and acknowledged by modern travellers¹⁸ to be the noblest piece of antiquity existing in the world. It appears at first sight extraordinary, that the expence of two thousand talents should have been bestowed on the Propylæa¹⁹. But we must consider, that this extensive name comprehended the temple of Minerva, the treasury, and other public edifices.

The Odeum, Parthenon, and Propylæa.

¹⁸ Sir George Wheeler's Travels, &c.

¹⁹ Plutarch. in Pericle, & Demosth. p. 71.

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Works of
Panænus,
Polygno-
tus, and
Micon.

The Pœcile, or diversified portico, which was painted by Panænus, the brother of Phidias, assisted by Polygnotus and Micon, must have been a work of great time and expence. Its front and ceilings were of marble, like those of all the other porticoes leading to the citadel, which still remained in the time of Pausanias, and were regarded, both on account of the workmanship and materials, as superior to any thing extant. In the Pœcile, those great painters, whose merit Pliny²⁰ forgets in his inaccurate epochs of art, had represented the most illustrious events of Grecian history; the victory of Theseus over the Amazons, the sacking of Troy, and particularly the recent exploits against the Persians. In the battle of Marathon, the Athenian and Platæan heroes were drawn from the life, or more probably from the innumerable statues which preserved the faithful lineaments of those illustrious patriots. The whole extent of the Acropolis, above six miles in circumference, was so diversified by works of painting and statuary, that it became one continued scene of elegance and beauty.

The Mi-
nerva in
the Aero-
polis.

But all these ornaments were surpassed by one production of Phidias, which probably was the last of that great master: his admired statue of Minerva, the erecting of which served to consecrate the Parthenon, was composed of gold and ivory, twenty-six cubits high, being of inferior dimensions

²⁰ He places the first epoch of great painters in the 90th Olymp.
A. C. 420.

to his Minerva Poliades of bronze, the spear and crest of which was seen from the promontory of Sunium²¹, at twenty-five miles distance. Parrhasius had painted the ornaments of the latter²², Phidias himself adorned every part of the former; and the compliment which, in this favourite work, he took an opportunity of paying to the merit of Pericles, occasioned (as we shall have occasion to explain²³) his own banishment, a disgrace which he seems not to have long survived. Cicero, Plutarch, Pliny, and Pausanias, had seen and admired this invaluable monument of piety, as well as genius, since the Minerva of Phidias increased the devotion of Athens towards her protecting divinity. It belongs only to those who have seen and studied, to describe such master-pieces of art; and as they exist no more, it will better suit the design of this history, to confine ourselves to such works as we ourselves have seen, and which are generally acknowledged to bear the impression of the Socratic age, when philosophy gave law to painting and sculpture, as well as to poetry and eloquence.

Were it allowed to make the melancholy supposition, that all the monuments of Grecian literature had perished in the general wreck of their nation and liberty, and that posterity could collect nothing farther concerning that celebrated people, but what appeared from the Apollo Belvidere, the groupes of the Laocoon and Niobé, and other statues, gems, or medals, now scattered over Italy and

Charac-
teristic ex-
cellence of
Grecian
art.

²¹ Pausanias Attic.

²² Idem, *ibid.*

²³ Plutarch. in Pericl. & Thucydid. l. ii.

Europe,

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Europe, what opinion would mankind form of the genius and character of the Greeks? would it correspond with the impressions made by their poets, orators, and historians? which impression would be most favourable? and what would be the precise difference between them? The solution of these questions will throw much light on the present subject.

Circumstances in which it agreed with poetry and eloquence.

The first observation that occurs on the most superficial, and that is strongly confirmed by a more attentive survey of the ancient marbles, is, that their authors perfectly understood proportion, anatomy, the art of clothing, without concealing the naked figure, and whatever contributes to the justness and truth of design. The exact knowledge of form is as necessary to the painter or statuary, whose business it is to represent *bodies*, as that of language to the poet or historian, who undertakes to describe *actions*. In this particular, it would be unnecessary to institute a comparison between Grecian writers and artists, since they are both allowed as perfect in their respective kinds as the condition of humanity renders possible.

The expression of passions, sentiments and character, in the works of poets and orators;

But when we advance a step farther, and consider the expression of passions, sentiments, and character, we find an extraordinary difference, or rather contrariety. Homer, Sophocles, and Demosthenes, are not only the most original, but the most animated and glowing, of all writers. Every sentence is energetic; all the parts are in motion; the passions are described in their utmost fury, and expressed by the boldest words and gestures. To keep

keep to the tragic poet, whose art approaches the nearest to painting and sculpture, the heroes, and even the gods of Sophocles, frequently display the impetuosity of the most ungoverned natures; and, what is still more extraordinary, sometimes betray a momentary weakness, extremely inconsistent with their general character. The rocks of Lemnos resound with the cries of Philoctetes; Oedipus, yielding to despair, plucks out his eyes; even Hercules, the model of fortitude, sinks under the impressions of pain or sorrow.

Nothing can be more opposite to the conduct of Grecian artists. *They* likewise have represented Philoctetes; but, instead of effeminate tears and lamentations, have given him the patient concentrated woe of a suffering hero. The furious Ajax of Timomachus was painted, not in the moment when he destroyed the harmless sheep instead of the hostile Greeks, but after he had committed this mad deed, and when his rage having subsided, he remained, like the sea after a storm, surrounded with the scattered fragments of mangled carcases, and reflecting with the silent anguish of despair on his useless and frantic brutality. The revenge of Medea against her husband was not represented, as in Euripides, butchering her innocent children, but while she was still wavering and irresolute, agitated between resentment and pity. Even Clytemnestra, whose unnatural, intrepid cruelty, poets and historians had so indignantly described and arraigned, was not deemed a proper subject for the pencil, when embruing her hands in the blood of

in those of
painters
and statua-
ries.

Aga-

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Agamemnon. And although this may be referred to a rule of Aristotle, "that the characters of women should not be represented as too daring or decisive;" yet we shall find on examination that it results from principles of nature, whose authority is still more universal and indispensable. The consideration of the Apollo, Niobé, and Laocoon, whose copies have been infinitely multiplied, and are familiarly known, will set this matter in the clearest point of view.

illustrated
by the
Apollo
Belvidere;

The Apollo Belvidere is universally felt and acknowledged to be the sublimest figure that either skill can execute, or imagination conceive. That favourite divinity, whom ancient poets seem peculiarly fond of describing in the warmest colours²⁴, is represented in the attitude of darting the fatal arrow against the serpent Pytho, or the giant Tityus. Animated by the noblest conception of heavenly powers, the artist has far outstepped the perfections of humanity, and (if we may speak without irreverence) made the corrupt put on incorruption, and the mortal immortality. His stature is above the human, his attitude majestic; the Elysian spring of youth softens the manly graces of his person, and the bold structure of his limbs. Disdain sits on his lips, and indignation swells his nostrils; but an unalterable serenity invests his front, and the sublime elevation of his aspect aspires at deeds of renown still surpassing the present object of his victory.

²⁴ Horace, b. iii. ode 4. ver. 60.

The irascible passions are not represented with more dignity in the Apollo, than are those of fear, terror, and consternation, in the Niobé. This group contained Niobé and her husband Amphion, with seven sons, and as many daughters. Their melancholy story, which is too well known²⁵ to be related here, required the deepest expression; and the genius of the artist has chosen the only moment when this expression could be rendered consistent with the highest beauty; a beauty not flattering the senses by images of pleasure, but transporting the fancy into regions of purity and virtue. The excess and suddenness of their disaster, occasioned a degree of amazement and horror, which, suspending the faculties, involved them in that silence and insensibility, which neither breaks out in lamentable shrieks, nor distorts the countenance, but which leaves full play to the artist's skill to represent motion without disorder, or, in other words, to render expression graceful.

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by the
group of
Niobé;

The Laocoon may be regarded as the triumph of Grecian sculpture; since bodily pain, the grossest and most ungovernable of all our passions, and that pain united with anguish and torture of mind, are yet expressed with such propriety and dignity, as afford lessons of fortitude superior to any taught in the schools of philosophy. The horrible shriek which Virgil's Laocoon²⁶ emits, is a proper circumstance for poetry, which speaks to the fancy

and by that
of the Lao-
coon.

²⁵ Ovid. *Metamorph.* l. vi. ver. 146, & seqq.

²⁶ *Æneid*, l. ii. ver. 222.

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by images and ideas borrowed from all the senses, and has a thousand ways of ennobling its object; but the expression of this shriek would have totally degraded the statue. It is softened, therefore, into a patient sigh, with eyes turned to heaven in search of relief. The intolerable agony of suffering nature is represented in the lower part, and particularly in the extremities, of the body; but the manly breast struggles against calamity. The contention is still more plainly perceived in his furrowed forehead; and his languishing paternal eye demands assistance, less for himself, than for his miserable children, who look up to him for help.

Different
impression
made by
the same
objects, as
exhibited
by poets
and painters,

If subjects of this nature are expressed without appearing hideous, shocking, or disgusting, we may well suppose that more temperate passions are represented with the greatest moderation and dignity. The remark is justified by examining the remains or imitations of Grecian art; and were we to deduce from these alone the character of the nation, it would seem at first sight, that the contemporaries of Pericles must have been a very superior people in point of fortitude, self-command, and every branch of practical philosophy, to the Athenians who are described by poets and historians.

founded in
the different
nature
of their respective
arts.

But when we consider the matter more deeply, we shall find that it is the business of history to describe men as they are; of poetry and painting, to represent them as may afford most pleasure and instruction to the reader or spectator. The aim of these imitative arts is the same, but they differ widely in the mode, the object, and extent, of their

their imitation. The poet who describes *actions* in *time*, may carry the reader through all the gradations of passion, and display his genius most powerfully in its most furious excess. But the painter or statuary, who represents *bodies* in *space*, is confined to one moment, and must choose that which leaves the freest play to the imagination. This can seldom be the highest pitch of passion, which leaves nothing beyond it; and in contemplating which, the sympathy of the spectator, after his first surprise subsides, can only descend into indifference. Every violent situation, moreover, is felt not to be lasting; and all extreme perturbation is inconsistent with beauty, without which no visible object can long attract or please²⁷.

²⁷ This subject is admirably treated in Lessing's *Laocoon*, in which he traces the *bounds* of painting and poetry; a work which, it is much to be regretted, that great genius did not finish.

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Causes of the Peloponnesian War.—Rupture between Corinth and its Colony Corcyra.—Sea Fights.—Insolence and Cruelty of the Corcyreans.—They provoke the Resentment of the Peloponnesians—Obtain the Protection of Athens—Are defeated by the Corinthians—Who dread the Resentment of Athens.—Their Scheme for rendering it impotent.—Description of the Macedonian Coast.—It revolts from Athens.—Siege of Potidæa.—General Confederacy against Athens.—Peloponnesian Embassy.—Its Demands firmly answered by Pericles.—His Speech to the Athenians.—The Thebans surprise Plataea.—Preparations for War on both Sides.—Invasion of Attica.—Operations of the Athenian Fleet.—Plague in Athens.—Calamitous Situation of that Republic.—Magnanimity of Pericles.—Firmness of his last Advice.—His Death and Character.

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Pericles
summons
to Athens
deputies
from all
the Gre-
cian re-
publics.

BY the lustre of the elegant arts, the magnificence of Pericles had displayed and ennobled the military glory of his country; and the pre-eminence of Athens seemed immoveably established on the solid foundation of internal strength, adorned by external splendour. But this abundant measure of prosperity satisfied neither the active ambition of the republic, nor the enterprising genius of its
its

its minister. The Greeks beheld and admired, but had not yet formally acknowledged, the full extent of Athenian greatness. In order to extort this reluctant confession, than which nothing could more firmly secure to him the affectionate gratitude of his fellow-citizens, Pericles dispatched ambassadors to the republics and colonies in Europe and in Asia, requiring the presence of their deputies in Athens, to concert measures for rebuilding their ruined temples, and for performing the solemn vows and sacrifices promised, with devout thankfulness, to the immortal gods, who had wonderfully protected the Grecian arms, during their long and dangerous conflict with the Persian empire. This proposal, which tended to render Athens the common centre of deliberation and of union, was readily accepted in such foreign parts as had already submitted to the authority of that republic. But in neighbouring states, the ambassadors of Pericles were received coldly, and treated disrespectfully; in most assemblies of the Peloponnesus they were heard with secret disgust, and the pride of the Spartan senate openly derided the insolence of their demands. When, at their return home, they explained the behaviour of the Spartans, Pericles exclaimed, in his bold style of eloquence, that he “ beheld war advancing with wide and rapid steps from the Peloponnesus¹. ”

Such was the preparation of materials which the smallest spark might throw into combustion. But

Introduction to the history of

¹ Plut. in Pericle.

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the Peloponnesian
war.

before we relate the events which immediately occasioned the memorable war of twenty-seven years, it is impossible (if the calamities of our own times have taught us to compassionate the miserable) not to drop a tear over the continual disasters which so long and so cruelly afflicted the most valuable and enlightened portion of mankind, and whose immortal genius was destined to enlighten the remotest ages of the world. When rude, illiterate peasants are summoned to mutual hostility, and, unaffected by personal motives of interest or honour, expend their strength and blood to gratify the sordid ambition of their respective tyrants, we may lament the general stupidity and wretchedness of human nature; but we cannot heartily sympathise with men who have so little sensibility, nor very deeply and feelingly regret, that those should suffer pain, who seem both unwilling and incapable to relish pleasure. Their heavy unmeaning aspect, their barbarous language, and more barbarous manners, together with their total indifference to the objects and pursuits which form the dignity and glory of man; these circumstances, interrupting the ordinary course of our sentiments, divert or repel the natural current of sympathy. Their victories or defeats are contemplated without emotion, coldly related, and read without interest or concern. But the war of Peloponnesus presents a different spectacle. The adverse parties took arms, not to support the unjust pretensions of a tyrant, whom they had reason to hate or to despise, but to vindicate their civil rights, and to maintain their political

cal

cal independence. The meanest Grecian soldier knew the duties of the citizen, the magistrate, and the general². His life had been equally divided between the most agreeable amusements of leisure, and the most honourable employments of activity. Trained to those exercises and accomplishments which give strength and agility to the limbs, beauty to the shape, and grace to the motions, the dignity of his external appearance announced the liberal greatness of his mind; and his language, the most harmonious and expressive ever spoken by man, comprehended all that variety of conception, and all those shades of sentiment, that characterise the most exalted perfection of human manners.

Ennobled by such actors, the scene itself was highly important, involving not only the states of Greece, but the greatest of the neighbouring kingdoms; and, together with the extent of a foreign war, exhibiting the intenseness of domestic sedition. As it exceeded the ordinary duration of human power or resentment, it was accompanied with unusual circumstances of terror, which, to the pious credulity of an unfortunate age, naturally announced the wrath of heaven, justly provoked by human cruelty. While pestilence and famine multiplied the actual sufferings, eclipses and earthquakes increased the consternation and horror of

Magni-
tude and
import-
ance of the
subject.

² Such is the testimony uniformly given of them in the panegyric of Athens by Isocrates, and confirmed by the more impartial authority of Xenophon, in the expedition of Cyrus. Their exploits in that wonderful enterprise justify the highest praise; and yet the national character had rather degenerated than improved, in the long interval between the periods alluded to.

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that lamentable period³. Several warlike communities were expelled from their hereditary possessions; others were not only driven from Greece, but utterly extirpated from the earth; some fell a prey to party-rage, others to the vengeance of foreign enemies; some were slowly exhausted by the contagion of a malignant atmosphere, others overwhelmed at once by sudden violence; while the combined weight of calamity assailed the power of Athens, and precipitated the downfall of that republic from the pride of prosperous dominion, to the dejection of dependence and misery⁴.

Rupture
between
Corinth
and its co-
lony Cor-
cyra.
Olymp.
lxxxv. 2.
A.C. 439.

The general, but latent hostility of the Greeks, of which we have already explained the cause, was first called into action by a rupture between the ancient republic of Corinth, and its flourishing colony Corcyra. The haughty disdain of Corcyra, elated with the pride of wealth and naval greatness, had long denied and scorned those marks of defer-

³ Thucyd. l. i. p. 16, & seqq.

⁴ For the Peloponnesian war we have not, indeed, a full stream of history, but a regular series of annals in Thucydides and Xenophon; authors, of whom each might say,

Quæque ipse miserrima vidi,

Et quæcum pars magna fui : ———

Many material circumstances may likewise be learned from the Greek orators, the writings of Plato and Aristotle, the comedies of Aristophanes, the twelfth and two following books of Diodorus Siculus, and Plutarch's Lives of Pericles, Nicias, Alcibiades, Lysander, and Agesilaus. It is remarkable, that the heavy compiler, as well as the lively biographer, have both followed the long lost works of Ephorus and Theopompus, in preference to those of Thucydides and Xenophon; a circumstance which strongly marks their want of judgment, but which renders their information more interesting to posterity.

ence

ence and respect which the uniform practice of Greece exacted from colonies towards their mother-country. At the Olympic and other solemn festivals, they yielded not the place of honour to the Corinthians; they appointed not a Corinthian high-priest to preside over their religion; and when they established new settlements on distant coasts, they requested not, as usual with the Greeks, the auspicious guidance of a Corinthian conductor^s.

While the ancient metropolis, incensed by those instances of contempt, longed for an opportunity to punish them, the citizens of Epidamnus, the most considerable sea-port on the coast of the Adriatic, craved assistance at Corinth against the barbarous incursions of the Taulantii, an Illyrian tribe, who, having united with a powerful band of Epidamnian exiles, greatly infested that territory, and threatened to storm the city. As Epidamnus was a colony of Corcyra, its distressed inhabitants had first sought protection there; but although their petition was preferred with respectful deference, and urged with the most affecting demonstrations of abasement and calamity, by ambassadors who long remained under the melancholy garb of supplicants in the temple of Corcyrean Juno, the proud insensibility of these intractable islanders shewed not the smallest inclination to relieve them; partly restrained, it is probable, by the secret practices of the Epidamnian exiles, consisting of some

The Corinthians
protect
Epidam-
nus.

^s Schol. in Thucyd. ad locum. He mentions the other circumstances which I have melted into the text, and which will afterwards be confirmed by more classic authority.

CHAP. of the principal and richest families of that mari-
 XV. time republic. The Corinthians readily embraced
 the cause of a people abandoned by *their* natural
 protectors, and *their own* inveterate enemies ; and
 immediately supplied Epidamnus with a con-
 siderable body of troops, less with a view to defend
 its walls against the assaults of the Taulantii, than
 in order irrecoverably to detach and alienate its
 inhabitants from the interest of Corcyra.

Are de-
 feated at
 sea by the
 Corcy-
 reans.
 Olymp.
 lxxxvi. 2.
 A. C. 435.

The indignation of the Corcyreans was inflamed
 into fury, when they understood that those whom
 they had long affected to consider as aliens and
 as rivals, had interfered in the affairs of their co-
 lony. They instantly launched a fleet of forty sail,
 proceeded in hostile array to the harbour of Epi-
 damnus, summoned the inhabitants to re-admit
 their exiles, and to expel the foreign troops. With
 such unconditional and arbitrary demands, the
 weakest and most pusillanimous garrison could
 scarcely be supposed to comply. The Epidam-
 nians rejected them with scorn ; in consequence of
 which their city was invested and attacked with
 vigour, by land and sea. The Corinthians were
 now doubly solicitous, both to defend the place,
 and to protect the troops already thrown into it,
 consisting partly of their Leucadian and Ambracian
 allies, but chiefly of Corinthian citizens. A pro-
 clamations, first published at Corinth, was industri-
 ously disseminated through Greece, inviting all
 who were unhappy at home, or who courted glory
 abroad, to undertake an expedition to Epidamnus,
 with assurance of enjoying the immunities and
 honours

honours of a republic whose safety they had ventured to defend. Many exiles and military adventurers, at all times profusely scattered over Greece, obeyed the welcome summons. Public assistance, likewise, was obtained, not only from Thebes and Megara, but from several states of the Peloponnese. In this manner the Corinthians were speedily enabled to fit out an armament of seventy-five sail; which, directing its course towards Epidamnus, anchored in the Ambracian gulph, near the friendly harbour of Actium, where, in a future age, Augustus and Antony decided the empire of the Roman world. Near this celebrated scene of action, the impetuous Corcyreans hastened to meet the enemy. Forty ships were employed in the siege of Epidamnus. Twice that number sailed towards the Ambracian gulph. The hostile armaments fought with equal animosity; but the Corcyreans far surpassed in bravery and skill. Fifteen Corinthian vessels were destroyed; the rest escaped in disorder, and the decisive battle was soon followed by the surrender of Epidamnus. By a clemency little expected from the victors, the ancient inhabitants of the place were allowed their lives and liberties; but the Corinthians were made prisoners of war, and their allies condemned to death.

Epidamnus surrenders to the conquerors.

The Corcyreans thanked their gods, and erected a conspicuous trophy of victory on the promontory Leucimné, whose lofty ridges overlooked the distant scene of the engagement. During the two following years they reigned undisturbed masters of the neighbouring seas; and though a prin-

Their insolence and cruelty,
A. C. 434
—433.

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principle of fear, or perhaps a faint remnant of respect towards their ancient metropolis, prevented them from invading the territory of Corinth, they determined to make the confederates of that republic feel the full weight of their vengeance. For this purpose they ravaged the coast of Apollonia; plundered the city Ambracia; almost desolated the peninsula, now the island of Leucas; and, emboldened by success, ventured to land in the Peloponnesus, and set fire to the harbour of Cyllene, because in the late sea-fight the Elians, to whom that place belonged, had supplied Corinth with a few gallies ⁶.

which provoked the Peloponnesians.

The southern states of Greece, highly provoked by this outrage to the peaceable Elians, whose religious character had long commanded general respect, were still farther incensed by the active resentment of the Corinthians, who, exasperated at the disgrace of being vanquished by one of their own colonies, had, ever since their defeat, bent their whole attention, and employed the greatest part even of their private fortunes, to hire mercenaries, to gain allies, and especially to equip a new fleet, that they might be enabled to chastise the impious audacity (as they called it) of their rebellious children ⁷.

The Corcyreans and Corinthians send ambassadors to Athens.

The magistrates of Corcyra saw and dreaded the tempest that threatened to burst on them, and which the unassisted strength of their island was totally unable to resist. They had not taken part

⁶ Thucydid. l. i. p. 22, & seqq.

⁷ Idem, *ibid.*

in the late wars; they had not acceded to the last treaty of peace; they could not summon the aid of a single confederate. In this difficulty they sent ambassadors to Athens, well knowing the secret animosity between that republic and the enemies by whom their own safety was endangered. The Corinthians likewise sent ambassadors to defeat their purpose. Both were allowed a hearing in the Athenian assembly; but first the Corcyreans, who, in a studied oration, acknowledged, "that having no previous claim of merit to urge, they expected not success in their negotiation, unless an alliance between Athens and Corcyra should appear alike advantageous to those who proposed, and to those who accepted it. Of this the Athenians would immediately become sensible, if they reflected that the people of Peloponnesus being equally hostile to both (the open enemies of Corcyra, the secret and more dangerous enemies of Athens), their country must derive a vast accession of strength by receiving, without trouble or expence, a rich and warlike island, which, unassisted and alone, had defeated a numerous confederacy; and whose naval force, augmenting the fleet of Athens, would for ever render that republic sovereign of the seas. If the Corinthians complained of the injustice of receiving their colony, let them remember, that colonies are preserved by moderation, and alienated by oppression; that men settle in foreign parts to better their situation, not to submit their liberties; to continue the equals, not to become the slaves of their less adventurous fellow-citizens. If they pretended,

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Speech of
the Corcy-
reans.

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pretended, that the demand of Corcyra was inconsistent with the last general treaty of peace, let the words of that treaty confound them, which expressly declare every Grecian city, not previously bound to follow the standard of Athens or of Sparta, at full liberty to accede to the alliance of either of those powers³. But it became the dignity of Athens to expect honour and safety, not from the punctilious observance of a slippery convention, but from the manly and prompt vigour of her councils. It suited the renowned wisdom of a republic, which had ever anticipated her enemies, to prevent the fleet of Corcyra from falling a prey to that confederacy, with whose inveterate envy she herself must be soon called to contend; and to merit the useful gratitude of an island possessing other valuable advantages, and most conveniently situate for intercepting the Sicilian and Italian supplies, which, in the approaching and inevitable war, would otherwise so powerfully assist their Doric ancestors of Peloponnesus."

Speech of
the Corinthians.

The Corinthians indirectly answered this discourse by inveighing, with great bitterness, against the unexampled insolence and unnatural cruelty of Corcyra: "That infamous island had hitherto declined connection with every Grecian state, that she might carry on her piratical depredations unobserved, and alone enjoy the spoil of the unwary mariners who approached her inhospitable shores.

³ Εἰσὶται γὰρ ἐν αὐταῖς, τῶν Ἑλληνίδων πόλεων ἡ τις μὴδ' αὖτε συμμαχεῖ, εἶναι παρ' ἰπυτέροις ἀναρσεσκήται εἶθ' αἶν. The ἰπυτέροις justifies the paraphrase in the text.

Rendered

Rendered at once wealthy and wicked by this inhuman practice, the Corcyreans had divested themselves of all piety and gratitude towards their mother-country, and embrued their parricidal hands in their parent's blood. Their audacity having provoked a late vengeance, which they were unable to repel, they unseasonably sought protection from Athens, desiring those who were not accomplices of their injustice to participate their danger, and deluding them through the vain terror of contingent evil, into certain and immediate calamity; for such must every war be regarded, its event being always destructive, often fatal. The Corcyreans vainly chicaned as to *words*; Athens, it was clear, must violate the *sense* and *spirit* of the last treaty of peace, if she assisted the enemies of any contracting power. These fierce islanders acknowledged themselves a colony of Corinth, but pretended that settlements abroad owe nothing to those who established them, to those whose fostering care reared their infancy, from whose blood they sprung, by whose arms they have been defended. We affirm, on the contrary (and appeal to you, Athenians! who have planted so many colonies), that the mother-country is entitled to that authority which the Corcyreans have long spurned, to that respect which their insolence now refuses and disdains: that it belongs to us, their metropolis, to be their leaders in war, their magistrates in peace; nor can you, Athenians! oppose our just pretensions, and protect our rebellious colony, without setting an example most dangerous to yourselves."

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The Athenians enter into a treaty of defence with the Corcyreans.

These sensible observations made a deep impression on the moderate portion of the assembly; but the speech of the Corcyreans was more congenial to the ambitious views of the republic, and the daring spirit of Pericles. He wished, however, to avoid the dishonour of manifestly violating the peace, and therefore advised his countrymen to conclude with Corcyra, not a general or complete alliance, but only a treaty of defence, which, in case of invasion, obliged the two states reciprocally to assist each other.

Second
sea-fight
between
the Corinthians and
Corcyreans.
Olymp.
lxxxvii. 1.
A. C. 432.

This agreement was no sooner ratified than ten Athenian ships reinforced the fleet of Corcyra, stationed on the *eastern* coast of the island; because the Corinthians, with their numerous allies, already rendezvoused on the opposite shore of Epirus. The hostile armaments met in line of battle, near the small islands Sibota, which seem anciently to have been separated from the continent by the impetuosity of the deep and narrow sea between Epirus and Corcyra. The bold islanders, with an hundred and ten sail, furiously attacked the superior fleet of the Corinthians, which was divided into three squadrons; the Megareans and Ambracians on the right, the Elians and other allies in the centre, their own ships on the left, which composed the principal strength of their line. The narrowness of the strait, and the immense number of ships (far greater than had ever assembled in former battles between the Greeks), soon rendered it impossible, on either side, to display any superiority in sailing, or any address in manœuvre.

nœuvre. The action was irregular and tumultuous, and maintained with more firmness and vigour than naval skill. The numerous troops, both heavy and light-armed, who were placed on the decks, advanced, engaged, grappled, and fought with obstinate valour; while the ships, continuing motionless and inactive, made the sea-fight resemble a pitched battle. At length, twenty Corcyrean galleys, having broke the left wing of the enemy, and pursued them to the coast of Epirus, injudiciously landed there to burn or plunder the Corinthian camp.

This inessential service too much weakened the smaller fleet, and rendered the inequality decisive. The Corcyreans were defeated with great slaughter, their incensed adversaries disregarding plunder and prisoners, and only thirsting for blood and revenge. In the blindness of their rage they destroyed many of their fellow-citizens, who had been captured by the enemy in the beginning of the engagement. Nor was their loss of ships inconsiderable; thirty were sunk, and the rest so much shattered, that when they endeavoured to pursue the feeble remains of the Corcyrean fleet, which had lost seventy galleys, they were effectually prevented from executing this design by the small Athenian squadron, which, according to its instructions from the republic, had taken no share in the battle, but, agreeably to the recent treaty between Athens and Corcyra, hindered the total destruction of their allies, first by hostile threats, at length by actual resistance.

The Cor-
cyreans de-
feated.

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Arrival of
an Athe-
nian squa-
dron.

The Corinthians having dragged up their wreck, and recovered the bodies of their slain, refitted on the coast of Epirus, and hastened to Corcyra; considerably off which they beheld the enemy reinforced, and drawn up in line of battle, in order to defend their coast. They advanced, however, with intrepidity, till, to their surprise and terror, they perceived an unknown fleet pressing towards them. This new appearance shook their resolution, and made them change their course. The Corcyreans, whose situation at first prevented them from seeing the advancing squadron, were astonished at the sudden retreat of the enemy; but when they discovered its cause, their uncertainty and fears, increased by their late afflicting calamity, made them prefer the safest measure. *They* also turned their prows; and, while the Corinthians retired to Epirus, pressed in an opposite direction to Corcyra. There, to their inexpressible joy, not unmixed with shame, they were joined by the unknown fleet, consisting of twenty Athenian gallies; a reinforcement which enabled them, next morning, to brave the late victorious armament off the coast of Sibota, a deserted harbour of Epirus, opposite to the small islands of the same name.

The Corinthians remonstrate against the proceedings of the Athenians.

The Corinthians, unwilling to contend with the unbroken vigour of their new opponents, dispatched a brigantine with the following remonstrance: "You act most unjustly, men of Athens! in breaking the peace, and commencing unprovoked hostilities. On what pretence do you hinder the Corinthians from taking vengeance on an insolent foe?"

foe? If you are determined to persist in iniquity and cruelty, seize us who address you, and treat us as enemies." The words were scarcely ended when the Corcyreans exclaimed, with a loud and unanimous voice, "Seize, and kill them." But the Athenians answered with moderation: "Men of Corinth, we neither break the peace, nor act unjustly. We come to defend our allies of Corcyra: sail unmolested by us to whatever friendly port you deem most convenient; but if you purpose making a descent on Corcyra, or on any of the dependencies of that island, we will exert our utmost power to frustrate your attempt⁹."

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Their answer.

This menace, which prevented immediate hostility, did not deter the Corinthians from surprising, as they sailed homeward, the town of Anaëtorium, on the Ambracian gulph, which, in the time of harmony between the colony and parent state, had been built at the joint expence of Corinth and Corcyra. From this sea-port they carried off two hundred and fifty Corcyrean citizens, and eight hundred slaves. The former, added to the captives saved during the fury of the sea-fight, by the clemency or the avarice of a few Corinthian captains, made the whole prisoners of war amount to twelve hundred and fifty; a capture which, as we shall have occasion to relate, produced most important and lamentable consequences on the future fortune of Corcyra.

The Corinthians surprise Anaëtorium, and take many Corcyrean prisoners.

The Corinthians, having chastised the insolence of their revolted colony, had reason to dread the

Their scheme for defeating

⁹ Thucyd. p. 37.

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the ven-
geance of
Athens.
Olymp.
lxxxvii. 1.
A. C. 432.

Descrip-
tion of the
Macedo-
nian coast.

vengeance of its powerful ally. Impressed with this terror, they laboured with great activity and with unusual secrecy and address, to find for the Athenian arms an employment still more interesting than the Corcyrean war. The domestic strength of Athens defied assault; but a people who, on the basis of a diminutive territory and scanty population, had reared such an extensive fabric of empire, might easily be wounded in their foreign dependencies, which, for obvious causes, were ever prone to novelty and rebellion. The northern shores of the Ægean sea, afterwards comprehended under the name of Macedon, and forming the most valuable portion of that kingdom, reluctantly acknowledged the stern authority of a sovereign whom they obeyed and detested. This extensive coast, of which the subsequent history will deserve our attention, composed, next to the Ægean islands and colonies of Asia, the principal foreign dominions of the Athenian republic. The whole country (naturally divided by the Thermaic and Strymonic gulphs into the provinces of Pieria, Chalcis, and Pangæus) stretched in a direct line only an hundred and fifty miles; but the winding intricacies of the coast, indented by two great, and by two smaller bays, extended three times that length; and almost every convenient situation was occupied by a Grecian sea-port. But neither the extent of above four hundred miles, nor the extreme populousness of the maritime parts, formed the chief importance of this valuable possession. The middle division, called the region of Chalcis, because originally peopled

peopled by a city of that name in Eubœa, was equally fertile and delightful. The inland country, continually diversified by lakes, rivers, and arms of the sea, afforded an extreme facility of water carriage; Amphipolis, Acanthus, Potidæa, and many other towns, furnished considerable marts of commerce for the republics of Greece, as well as for the neighbouring kingdoms of Thrace and Macedon; and the constant demands of the merchant excited the patient industry of the husbandman. This beautiful district had, on one side, the black mountains of Pangæus, and on the other, the green vales of Pieria. The former, extending ninety miles towards the east and the river Nessus, abounded neither in corn nor pasture, but produced variety of timber proper for building ships; and the southern branches of the mountain contained rich veins of gold and silver, which were successively wrought by the Thasians and the Athenians, but of which the full value was first discovered by Philip of Macedon, who annually extracted from them the value of two hundred thousand pounds sterling¹⁰. The last and smallest division, Pieria, extended fifty miles along the Thermaic gulph to the confines of Thessaly and Mount Pindus. The towns of Pydna and Methoné enriched the shore with the benefits of arts and commerce. Nature had been peculiarly kind to the inland country, whose shady hills, sequestered walks and fountains, lovely verdure, and tranquil solitude, rendered it, in the fanciful belief of antiquity, the favourite

¹⁰ Diodorus, l. xvi. p. 514.

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haunt of the Muses; who borrowed from this district their favourite appellation of *Pierides*. According to the same poetical creed, these goddesses might well *envy* the mortal inhabitants, who led a pastoral life, enjoyed happiness, and are scarcely mentioned in history.

That
country re-
volts from
Athens.

Such was the nature and such the divisions of a territory, which the policy and resentment of Corinth encouraged to successful rebellion against the sovereignty of Athens. Several maritime communities of the Chalcidicé¹¹ took refuge within the walls of Olynthus, a town which they had built and fortified, at the distance of five miles from the sea, in a fertile and secure situation, between the rivers Olynthus and Amnion, which flow into the lake Bolyce, the inmost recess of the Toronaic gulph. The neighbouring city of Potidæa, a colony of Corinth, and governed by annual magistrates sent from the mother-country, yet like most establishments in the Chalcidicé, a tributary confederate¹² of Athens, likewise strengthened its walls, and prepared to revolt. But the Athenians anticipated this design, by sending a fleet of thirty sail, which having entered the harbour of Potidæa, com-

¹¹ In using the name of Chalcidicé I have followed the analogy of the Greek language rather than complied with custom; yet that part of the Macedonian coast, usually called the region of Chalcis, gave name to the province of Chalcidicé in Syria, as Strabo mentions in his sixteenth book; wherein he explains how the principal divisions of Syria, as well as Mesopotamia, came to be distinguished, after the conquests of Alexander, by Grecian appellations, borrowed from the geography described in the text.

¹² Συμμαχος ὑποταλῆς. Thucydid.

manded the citizens to demolish their fortifications, to give hostages as security for their good behaviour, and to dismiss the Corinthian magistrates. The Potidæans artfully requested that the execution of these severe commands might be suspended until they had time to send ambassadors to Athens, and to remove the unjust suspicions of their fidelity.

The weakness or avarice of Anchestratus, the Athenian admiral, listened to this deceitful request, and, leaving the coast of Potidæa, directed the operations of his squadron against places of less importance, not sparing the dependencies of Macedon. Meanwhile the Potidæans sent a public but illusive embassy to Athens, while one more effectual was secretly dispatched to Corinth, and other cities of the Peloponnesus, from which they were supplied with two thousand men, commanded by the Corinthian Aristeus, a brave and enterprising general. These troops were thrown into the place during the absence of the Athenian fleet; and the Potidæans, thus reinforced, set their enemies at defiance. Alarmed by this intelligence, the Athenians fitted out a new fleet of forty sail, with a large body of troops, under the command of Callias; who, arriving on the coast of Macedon, found the squadron of Anchestratus employed in the siege of Pydna. Callias judiciously exhorted him to desist from that enterprise, comparatively of little importance, that the united squadrons might attack Potidæa by sea, while an Athenian army of three thousand citizens, with a due proportion of allies, assaulted it by land. This measure was adopted;

The Athenians besiege Potidæa.
Olymp.
lxxxvii. 2.
A. C. 432.

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but the spirit of the garrison soon offered them battle, almost on equal terms, though with unequal success. Callias however was slain, and succeeded by Phormio; who, conducting a fresh supply of troops, desolated the hostile territory of Chalcis and Pieria; took several towns by storm; and, having ravaged the adjoining district, besieged the city of Potidæa.

The Corinthians endeavour to exasperate the Lacedæmonians against Athens.

While those transactions were carrying on in the north, the centre of Greece was shaken by the murmurs and complaints of the Corinthians and their Peloponnesian confederates, who lost all patience when their citizens were blocked up by an Athenian army. Accompanied by the deputies of several republics beyond the isthmus, who had recently experienced the arrogance of their imperious neighbour, they had recourse to Sparta, whose actual power and ancient renown justly merited the first rank in the confederacy, but whose measures¹³ were rendered slow and cautious by the foresight and peaceful counsels of the prudent Archidamus. When introduced into the Spartan assembly, the representatives of all the states inveighed, with equal bitterness, against the injustice and cruelty of Athens, while each described and exaggerated the weight of its peculiar grievances. The Megareans

¹³ Plutarch (in Pericl.) ascribes the backwardness of the Spartans to engage in war to the advice of their principal magistrates, bribed by Pericles, who wished to gain time for his military preparations; a report as improbable as another calumny, that they were bribed by their allies to take arms against Athens (Aristoph. in Pace). The cause of their irresolution, assigned in the text, is confirmed by the subsequent behaviour of Archidamus.

complained that, by a recent decree of that stern CHAP.
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unfeeling republic, they had been excluded from the ports and markets of Attica¹⁴; an exclusion which, considering the narrowness and poverty of their own rocky district, was equivalent to depriving them of the first necessities of life. The inhabitants of Ægina explained and lamented that, in defiance of recent and solemn treaties, and dis- regarding the liberal spirit of Grecian policy, the Athenians had reduced their unfortunate island into the most deplorable condition of servitude.

When other states had described their particular sufferings, the Corinthians last arose, and their speaker thus addressed the Lacedæmonian assembly: Speech of
the Corin-
thians;
“ Had we come hither, men of Lacedæmon! to urge our private wrongs, it might be sufficient barely to relate the transactions of the preceding, and present, years. The revolt of Corcyra, the siege of Potidæa, are facts which speak for them-

¹⁴ The Megareans were accused of ploughing some consecrated lands: they were accused of harbouring the Athenian slaves, fugitives, and exiles; other causes of complaint might easily have been discovered or invented by their powerful neighbours, who were provoked that such a small community on their frontier should uniformly spurn their authority. But the malignity of the comic writers of the times ascribed the severe decree against Megara to an event equally disgraceful to the morals of their country, and injurious to the honour of Pericles. The following verses are translated from the *Acharnenes* of Aristophanes:

Juvenes profecti Megaram ebrij auferunt
Simætham ex scortatione nobilem:
Megarensis hinc populus dolore perictus
Furatur Aspasæ duo scorta haud impiger:
Hinc initium belli prorupit
Universis Græcis ob tres meritriculas.

selfes;

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elves; but the thoughts of this assembly should be directed to objects more important than particular injuries, however flagrant and enormous. The *general* oppressive system of Athenian policy,—it is this which demands your most serious concern; a system aiming at nothing less than the destruction of Grecian freedom, which is ready to perish through your supine neglect. That moderation and probity, men of Sparta! for which your domestic counsels are justly famous, render you the dupes of foreign artifice, and expose you to become the victims of foreign ambition; which, instead of opposing with prompt alacrity, you have nourished by unseasonable delay; and, in consequence of this fatal error; are now called to contend, not with the infant weakness, but with the matured vigour of your enemies, those enemies, who, ever unsatisfied with their present measure of prosperity, are continually intent on some new project of aggrandizement. How different from *your* slow procrastination is the ardent character of the Athenians! Fond of novelty, and fertile in resources, alike active and vigilant, the accomplishment of one design leads them to another more daring. Desire, hope, enterprise, success, follow in rapid succession. Already have they subdued half of Greece; their ambition grasps the whole. Rouse, then, from your lethargy, defend your allies, invade Attica, maintain the glory of Peloponnesus, that sacred deposit, with which being entrusted by your ancestors, you are bound to transmit unimpaired to posterity.”

Several

Several Athenians, then residing on other business at Sparta, desired to be heard in defence of their country. Equity could not deny the request of these voluntary advocates, who spoke in a style well becoming the loftiness of their republic¹⁵. With the pride of superiority, rather than the indignation of innocence, they affected to despise the false aspersions of their adversaries; and, instead of answering directly the numerous accusations against their presumptuous abuse of power, described, with swelling encomiums, “the illustrious and memorable exploits of their countrymen; exploits which had justly raised them to a pre-eminence, acknowledged by their allies, uncontested by Sparta, and felt by Persia. When it became the dignity of Greece to chastise the repeated insults of that ambitious empire, the Spartans had declined the conduct of a distant war; Athens had assumed the abandoned helm, and, after demolishing the cruel dominion of Barbarians, had acquired a just and lawful sway over the coasts of Europe and of Asia. The new subjects of the republic were long treated rather as fellow-citizens, than as tributaries and slaves. But it was the nature of man to revolt against the *supposed* injustice of his equals, rather than against the *real* tyranny of his masters. This circumstance, so honourable to Athenian lenity, had occasioned several unprovoked rebellions, which the republic had been compelled to punish with an exemplary severity. The apprehension of future

answered
by the A-
thenians.

¹⁵ Thucyd. l. xliii. & seqq.

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commotions had lately obliged her to hold, with a firmer hand, the reins of government, and to maintain with armed power, an authority justly earned, and strictly founded in nature, of which it is an unalterable law, that the strong should govern the weak. If the Spartans, in violation of the right of treaties, thought proper to oppose this immovable purpose, Athens well knew how to redress her wrongs, and would, doubtless, uphold her empire with the same valour and activity by which it had been established."

Pacific ad-
vice of
king Ar-
chidamus;

Having heard both parties, the assembly adjourned, without forming any resolution. But next day, it appeared to be the prevailing opinion, that the arrogance and usurpation of Athens had already violated the peace, and that it became the prudence as well as the dignity of Sparta, no longer to defer hostilities. This popular current was vainly opposed by the experienced wisdom of king Archidamus, who still counselled peace and moderation, though his courage had been conspicuously distinguished in every season of danger. He exhorted his countrymen "not to rush blindly on war, without examining the resources of the enemy and their own. The Athenians were powerful in ships, in money, in cavalry, and in arms; of all which the Lacedæmonians were destitute, or, at least, but feebly provided. Whatever provocation, therefore, they had received, they ought in prudence to dissemble their resentment, until they could effectually exert their vengeance. The present crisis required negotiation; if that failed, the silent preparation of
a few

a few years would enable them to take the field with well-founded hopes of redressing the grievances of their confederates." Had this moderate language made any impression on such an assembly, it would have been speedily obliterated by the blunt boldness of Sthenelaides, one of the Ephori, who closed the debate. "Men of Sparta! Of the long speeches of the Athenians I understand not the drift. While they dwell with studied eloquence on their own praises, they deny not their having injured our allies. If they behaved *well* in the Persian war, and now *otherwise*, their degeneracy is only the more apparent. But then, and now, we are still the same; and if we would support our character, we must not overlook their injustice. They have ships, money, and horses; but we have good allies, whose interests we must not abandon. Why do we deliberate, while our enemies are in arms? Let us take the field with speed, and fight with all our might." The acclamations of the people followed, and war was resolved.

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opposed by
Sthenelai-
des, one of
the Ephori.

This resolution was taken in the fourteenth year after the conclusion of the general peace; but near a twelvemonth elapsed before the properest measures for invading Attica could be finally adjusted among the discordant members of so numerous a confederacy. It consisted of all the seven republics of the Peloponnesus, except Argos and Achaia, the first of which from ambition, and the second perhaps from moderation¹⁶, preserved, in the begin-

War de-
termined.
Olymp.
lxxxvii. 2.
A. C. 431.

General
confede-
racy
against
Athens;

¹⁶ The ambition of Argos is confirmed by the subsequent measures of that republic; the moderation of Achaia is suspected, from the nature of the Achaean laws, which will afterwards be described.

ning

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ning of the war, a suspicious neutrality. Of the nine northern republics, Acarnania alone declined joining the allies, its coast being particularly exposed to the ravages of the Corcyrean fleets. The cities of Naupactus and Platæa, for reasons that will soon appear, were totally devoted to their Athenian protectors; whose cause was likewise embraced by several petty princes of Thessaly. But all the other states beyond the isthmus longed to follow the standard of Sparta, and to humble the aspiring ambition of their too powerful neighbour.

sends a
menacing
embassy to
that re-
public;

The representatives of these various communities having, according to the received practice of Greece, assembled in the principal city of the confederacy, were strongly encouraged by the Corinthians, who, as their colony of Potidæa was still closely besieged, laboured to accelerate reprisals on Attica, by exhibiting the most advantageous prospect of the approaching war. They observed, "That the army of the confederacy, exceeding sixty thousand men, far out-numbered the enemy, whom they excelled still more in merit, than they surpassed in number. The one was composed of national troops, fighting for the independence of those countries in whose government they had a share; the other chiefly consisted in vile mercenaries, whose pay was their government and their country. If supplies of money were requisite, the allied states would doubtless be more liberal and forward to defend their interest and honour, than the reluctant tributaries of Athens to rivet their servitude and chains: and if still more money should

should be wanted, the Delphic and Olympic treasures afforded an inexhaustible resource, which could not be better expended than in defending the sacred cause of justice and of Grecian freedom." In order to gain full time, however, for settling all matters among themselves, the confederates dispatched to Athens various overtures of accommodation, which they well knew would be indignantly rejected. In each embassy they rose in their demands, successively requiring the Athenians to raise the siege of Potidæa; to repeal their prohibitory decree against Megara; to withdraw their garrison from Ægina; in fine, to declare the independence of their colonies ¹⁷.

These last demands were heard at Athens with a mixture of rage and terror. The capricious multitude, who had hitherto approved and admired the aspiring views of Pericles, now trembled on the brink of the precipice to which he had conducted them. They had hitherto pushed the siege of Potidæa with great vigour, but without any near

which
alarms the
Atheni-
ans.

¹⁷ Besides complying with the demands mentioned in the text, the Athenians were required "to expel the descendants of those impious men who had profaned the temple of Minerva." This alluded to an event which happened the first year of the 45th Olympiad, or 598 years before Christ. Cylon, a powerful Athenian, having seized the citadel, and aspiring at royalty, was defeated in his purpose by Megacles, a maternal ancestor of Pericles, who having decoyed the associates of Cylon from the temple of Minerva, butchered them without mercy, and with too little respect for the privileges of that venerable sanctuary. The whole transaction is particularly related by Plutarch in his life of Solon. The renewal of such an antiquated complaint, at this juncture, pointed particularly at Pericles, and shewed the opinion which the Spartans entertained of his unrivalled influence and authority.

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excited
against Pe-
ricles.Persecu-
tion of his
friends.

prospect of success. They must now contend with a numerous confederacy, expose their boasted grandeur to the doubtful chance of war, and exchange the amusements and pleasures of the city for the toils and hardships of a camp. Of these discontented murmurs the rivals and enemies of Pericles greedily availed themselves, to traduce the character and administration of that illustrious statesman. It was insinuated, that, sacrificing to private passion the interest of his country, he had enacted the imperious decree, of which the allies so justly complained, to resent the personal injury of his beloved Aspasia, whose family had been insulted by some licentious youths of Megara¹⁸. Diopeithes, Dracontides, and other demagogues, derided the folly of taking arms on such a frivolous pretence, and as preparatory to the impeachment of Pericles himself, the courts of justice were fatigued with prosecutions of his valuable friends.

The philosopher Anaxagoras, and Phidias the statuary, reflected more lustre than they could derive from the protection of any patron. The mixed character of Aspasia was of a more doubtful kind. To the natural and sprightly graces of Ionia, her native country, she added extraordinary accomplishments of mind and body; and having acquired in high perfection the talents and excellencies of the other sex, was accused of being too indifferent to the honour of her own. Scarcely superior in modesty to Phryn  , Thais, or Erigone¹⁹, her wit, her knowledge, and her eloquence,

¹⁸ See above, p. 201.¹⁹ See above, p. 155.

excited universal admiration or envy²⁰, while the beauty of her fancy and of her person inspired more tender sentiments into the susceptible breast of Pericles. She was reproached, not with entertaining free votaries of pleasure in her family (which in that age was regarded as a very allowable commerce), but of seducing the virtue of Athenian matrons; a crime severely punished by the laws of every Grecian republic. But we have reason to conclude her innocent, since the arguments and tears of her lover saved her from the fury of an enraged populace, at a crisis when his most strenuous exertions could not prevent the banishment of Anaxagoras and Phidias.

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The former was accused of propagating doctrines inconsistent with the established religion; the latter, of having indulged the very pardonable vanity (as it should seem) of representing himself, and his patron, on the shield of his admired statue of Minerva. There, with inimitable art, Phidias had engraved the renowned victory of the Athenians over the warlike daughters of the Thermodon²¹; he had delineated himself in the figure of a bald old man raising a heavy stone (an allusion to his skill in architecture), while the features of Pericles were distinguished in the countenance of an Athenian chief, bravely combating the queen of the Amazons, though his elevated arm hid part of the face, and in some measure concealed the resemblance²². For this fictitious crime, Phidias was

Banishment of
Anaxagoras and
Phidias.

²⁰ Plato in Menex.

²¹ Lyfias Orat. Funeb.

²² Plut. in Pericl. & Aristot. de Mund.

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driven from a city which had been adorned by the unwearied labours of his long life, and debarred beholding those wonders of art which his sublime genius had created.

Accusa-
tion of
Pericles.

The accusation of the principal friends of Pericles paved the way for his own. He was reproached with embezzling the public treasure; but, on this occasion, plain facts confounded the artifices of his enemies. It was proved, that his private expences were justly proportioned to the measure of his patrimony; many instances were brought of his generous contempt of wealth in the service of his country; and it appeared, after the strictest examination, that his fortune had not increased since he was intrusted with the exchequer. This honourable display of unshaken probity, which had ever formed the basis of the authority²³ of Pericles, again reconciled to him the unsteady affections of his countrymen, and gave irresistible force to that famous and fatal speech, which unalterably decided the war of Peloponnesus.

²³ This testimony, which is given by the impartiality of Thucydides, destroys at once the numerous aspersions of the comic poets of the times, which have been copied by Plutarch, and from him transcribed by modern compilers. Pericles, it is said, raised the war of Peloponnesus, merely for his own convenience and safety; and was encouraged to this measure by the advice of his kinsman Alcibiades, then a boy; who, calling one day at his house, was refused admittance, "because Pericles was occupied in considering how he might best state his accounts." "Let him rather consider," said the sagacious stripling, "how to give no account at all." Pericles took the hint, and involved his country in a war, which allowed no time for examining the public expenditure. Such anecdotes may amuse those who can believe them.

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He justifies
his mea-
sures, and
maintains
the neces-
sity of the
war;

“ Often have I declared, Athenians ! that we must not obey the unjust commands of our enemies. I am still firmly of that mind, convinced as I am of the dangerous vicissitudes of war and fortune ; and that human hopes, designs, and pursuits, are all fleeting and fallacious. Yet, in the present crisis, necessity and glory should alike fix us to this immovable resolution. The decree against Megara, which the first embassy required us to repeal, is not the cause of that hostile jealousy which has long secretly envied our greatness, and which has now more openly conspired our destruction. Yet that decree, of which some men have spoken so lightly, involved the honour of our councils and the stability of our empire. By pusillanimously repealing it, we should have emboldened that malignant enmity, which, notwithstanding our proper firmness in the first instance, has yet successively risen to higher and more arbitrary demands ; demands which merit to be answered, not by embassies, but by arms.

“ The flourishing resources, and actual strength, of the republic, afford us the most flattering prospect of military success. Impreguably fortified by land, our shores are defended by three hundred gallies ; besides a body of cavalry, to the number of twelve hundred, together with two thousand archers, we can immediately take the field with thirteen thousand pikemen, without draining our foreign garrisons, or diminishing the complete number of sixteen thousand men who defend the walls and fortresses in Attica. The wealthy sea-

explains
the
strength
and re-
sources of
the repub-
lic ;

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ports of Thrace and Macedon; the flourishing colonies of Ionia, Eolia, and Doria; in a word, the whole extensive coast of the Asiatic peninsula, acknowledge, by annual contributions, the sovereignty of our guardian navy, whose strength is increased by the ships of Chios, Lesbos, and Corcyra, while the smaller islands furnish us, according to their ability, with money and troops. Athens thus reigns queen of a thousand²⁴ tributary republics, and notwithstanding the expences incurred by the siege of Potidæa, and the architectural ornaments of the city, she possesses six thousand talents in her treasury.

which he
contrasts
with the
weakness
of the ene-
my.

“ The situation of our enemies is totally the reverse. Animated by rage, and emboldened by numbers, they may be roused to a transient, desultory assault; but destitute of resources, and divided in interests, they are totally incapable of any steady, persevering exertion. With sixty thousand men they may enter Attica; and if our unseasonable courage gives them an opportunity, may win a battle; but unless our rash imprudence assists and enables them, they cannot possibly prosecute a successful war. Indeed, Athenians! I dread less the power of the enemy, than your own ungovernable spirit. Instead of being seduced from your security, by a vain desire to defend, against superior numbers, your plantations and villas in the

²⁴ Aristoph. Vesp. He says, that twenty thousand Athenians might live as in the Elysian fields, if each tributary city undertook to provide for twenty citizens. V. 705, &c.

open country, you ought to destroy these superfluous possessions with your own hands. To you who receive the conveniences of life from so many distant dependencies, the devastation of Attica is a matter of small moment; but how can your enemies repair, how can they survive, the devastation of the Peloponnesus? How can they prevent, or remedy, this fatal, this intolerable calamity, while the squadrons of Athens command the surrounding seas? If these considerations be allowed their full weight; if reason, not passion, conducts the war, it seems scarcely in the power of fortune to rob you of victory. Yet let us answer the Peloponnesians with moderation, “that we will not forbid the Megareans our ports and markets, if the Spartans, and other states of Greece, abolish their exclusive and inhospitable laws: that we will restore independent governments to such cities as were free at the last treaty of peace, provided the Spartans engage to follow our example: that we are ready to submit all differences to the impartial decision of any equitable tribunal; and that, although these condescending overtures be rejected, we will not commence hostilities, but are prepared to repel them with our usual vigour²⁵.” The assembly murmured applause; a decree was proposed and

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Dictates
a reply
to the
Pelopon-
nesians,

which is
taken for
a declara-
tion of
war.

²⁵ In examining the speech ascribed to Pericles, on this occasion, by Thucydides, the attentive reader will perceive that it supposes the knowledge of several events omitted in the preceding narrative of that historian, but which are carefully related in the text. The English speech is shorter than the Greek, but contains more information, collected from Plutarch, Diodorus, Aristophanes, and the 2d book of Thucydides himself.

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ratified; the ambassadors returned home with the reply dictated by Pericles; which, moderate as it seemed to the Athenian statesman, sounded like an immediate declaration of war to the Spartans and their allies.

The The-
bans sur-
prise Pla-
tæa.
Olymp. .
lxxxvii. 2.
A.C. 431.
May the
7th.

Six months after the battle of Potidæa, the Thebans, who were the most powerful and the most daring of these allies, undertook a military enterprise against the small but magnanimous republic of Platæa. Though situate in the heart of Bœotia, amidst numerous and warlike enemies, the Platæans still preserved an unshaken fidelity to Athens, whose toils and triumphs they had shared in the Persian war. Yet even this feeble community, surrounded on every side by hostile Bœotians, was not exempted from domestic discord. Naucleides, the perfidious and bloody leader of an aristocratical faction, engaged to betray the Platæan gates to a body of foreign troops, provided they enabled him to overturn the democracy, and to take vengeance on his political adversaries, whom he regarded as his personal foes. Eurymachus, a noble and wealthy Theban, with whom, in the name of his associates, this sanguinary agreement had been contracted, entered Platæa with three hundred of his countrymen, at the first watch of the night; but, regardless of their promise to Naucleides, who expected that they would break tumultuously into the houses, and butcher his enemies, the Thebans formed regularly in arms, and remained quietly in the market-place, having issued a proclamation to invite all the citizens indiscrimi-

minately

minately to become allies to Thebes. The Plataeans readily accepted a proposal, which delivered them from the terror of immediate death. But while they successively ratified the agreement, they observed, with mixed shame and joy, that darkness and surprise had greatly augmented the number of the conspirators. Encouraged by this discovery, they secretly dispatched a messenger to Athens; and, while they expected the assistance of their distant protector, determined to leave nothing untried for their own deliverance.

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The night was spent in an operation not less daring than extraordinary. As they could not assemble in the streets without alarming suspicion, they dug through the interior walls of their houses, and fortified the outward in the best manner the time would allow, with their ploughs, carts, and other instruments of husbandry. Before day-break the work was complete; when, with one consent, they rushed furiously against the enemy, the women and children animating with horrid shrieks and gestures the efforts of their rage. It was night, and a storm of rain and thunder augmented the gloomy terrors of the battle. The Thebans were unacquainted with the ground; above an hundred fell; near two hundred fled in trepidation to a lofty and spacious tower adjoining the walls, which they mistook for one of the gates of the city. In the first movements of resentment, the Plataeans prepared to burn them alive; but a moment's reflection deterred them from this dangerous cruelty. Meanwhile, a considerable body of The-

Daring
enterprise
of the Pla-
taeans.

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banians advanced towards Plataea, to co-operate with their countrymen. Their progress would have been hastened by a fugitive who met them, and related the miscarriage of the enterprise, had not the heavy rain so much swelled the Asopus, that an unusual time was spent in crossing that river. They had scarcely entered the Plataean territory, when a second messenger informed them, that their unfortunate companions were all killed or taken prisoners. Upon this intelligence they paused to consider, whether, instead of proceeding to the Plataean walls, where they could not perform any immediate service, they ought not, as an easier enterprise, to seize the citizens of that place, who were dispersed over their villages in the open country.

Their stratagem for destroying the Thebans, without danger to themselves.

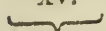
But while they deliberated on this measure, a Plataean herald arrived, complaining of the unjust and most unexpected infraction of the peace, by a daring and atrocious conspiracy; commanding the Thebans immediately to leave the territory of Plataea, if they hoped to deliver their fellow-citizens from captivity; and denouncing, if they refused compliance, that their countrymen would inevitably be punished with a cruel death. This stratagem, not less audacious than artful, prevailed on the enemy to repass the Asopus, while the Plataeans lost not a moment to assemble within their walls the scattered inhabitants of their fields and villas; and braving the Theban resentment, the immediate effects of which they had rendered impotent, massacred the unhappy prisoners, to the number of an hundred

hundred and eighty, among whom was Eurymachus, the chief promoter of the expedition. After this signal act of vengeance, they strengthened the works of the place; transported their wives and children to the tributary islands of Athens; and, that they might more securely sustain the expected siege, required and received from that republic a plentiful supply of provisions, and a considerable reinforcement of troops.

The sword was now drawn, and both parties seemed eager to exert their utmost strength. The Spartans summoned their confederates to the Isthmus; demanded money and ships from their Italian and Sicilian colonies; and solicited assistance from the Persian monarch Artaxerxes, and from Perdiccas king of Macedon; both of whom naturally regarded the Athenians as dangerous neighbours, and ambitious invaders of their coasts. The people of Athens also condescended to crave the aid of Barbarians, and actually contracted an alliance with Sitalces, the warlike chief of the Odrysiens, who formed the most powerful tribe in Upper Thrace. They required at the same time an immediate supply of cavalry from their Thesalian allies, while their fleet already cruised along the coast of Peloponnesus, to confirm the fidelity of the surrounding islands; an object deemed essential to the successful invasion of that territory. The unexperienced youth, extremely numerous in most republics of Greece, rejoiced at the prospect of war. The aged saw and dreaded the general commotion, darkly foretold, as they thought, by
ancient

Preparations for war on both sides.
A. C. 431.

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ancient oracles and prophecies, but clearly and recently announced, by an earthquake in the sacred, and hitherto immovable island of Delos. Such was the ardour of preparation, that only a few weeks after the surprise of Plataea, the Lacedæmonian confederates, to the number of sixty thousand, assembled from the north and south, at the Corinthian Isthmus. The several communities were respectively commanded by leaders of their own appointment; but the general conduct of the war was intrusted to Archidamus, the Spartan king.

Archidamus addresses the confederates.

In a council of the chiefs, that prince warmly approved their alacrity in taking the field, and extolled the greatness and bravery of an army, the most numerous and best provided that had ever followed the standard of any Grecian general. Yet their preparations, however extraordinary, were not greater than their enterprise required. They had waged war with a people not less powerful, than active and daring; who had discernment to perceive, and ability to improve, every opportunity of advantage; and whose resentment would be as much inflamed, as their pride would be wounded, by the approach of invasion and hostility. It seemed probable, that the Athenians would not allow their lands to be wasted, without attempting to defend them. The confederates, therefore, must be always on their guard; their discipline must be strict, regular, and uniform; to elude the skill, and to oppose the strength of Athens, demanded their utmost vigilance and activity.

Archi-

Archidamus, after leading his army into Attica, seems blamable in allowing their martial ardour to evaporate in the fruitless siege of Oenoë, the strongest Athenian town towards the southern frontier of Bœotia. This tedious and unsuccessful operation enabled the Athenians to complete, without interruption, the singular plan of defence so ably traced by the bold genius of Pericles. They hastened the desolation of their own fields; demolished their delightful gardens and villas, which it had been their pride to adorn; and transported, either to Athens or the isles, their valuable effects, their cattle, furniture, and even the frames of their houses. The numerous inhabitants of the country towns, and villages, where the more opulent Athenians commonly spent the greater part of their time, flocked to the capital, which was well furnished with the means of subsistence, though not of accommodation, for such a promiscuous crowd of strangers, with their families, slaves, or servants. Many people of lower rank, destitute of private dwellings, were obliged to occupy the public halls, the groves and temples, the walls and battlements. Even persons of distinction were narrowly and meanly lodged; an inconvenience severely felt by men accustomed to live at large in the country, in rural ease and elegance. But resentment against the public enemy blunted the sense of personal hardship, and silenced the voice of private complaint.

Meanwhile, the confederate army, having raised the siege of Oenoë, advanced along the eastern frontier

The confederates
ravage Attica.

CHAP. XV. } frontier of Attica; and, within eighty days after
 Olymp. } the surprize of Platæa, invaded the Thriasian plain,
 lxxxvii. 2. } the richest ornament of the Athenian territory.
 A. C. 431. } Having wasted that valuable district with fire and
 sword, they proceeded to Eleufis, and from thence
 to Acharnæ, the largest borough in the province,
 and only eight miles distant from the capital.
 There they continued an unusual length of time,
 gradually demolishing the houses and plantations,
 and daily exercising every act of rapacious cruelty,
 with a view either to draw the enemy to a battle,
 or to discover whether they were unalterably deter-
 mined to keep within their walls; a resolution,
 which, if clearly ascertained, would enable the in-
 vaders to proceed with more boldness and effect,
 and to carry on their ravages with security, even to
 the gates of Athens.

The Athe-
 nians re-
 tort their
 injuries.

The Athenians, hitherto intent on their naval preparations, had exerted an uncommon degree of patience and self-command. But their unruly passions could no longer be restrained, when they learned the proceedings in Acharnæ. The proprietors of that rich and extensive district boasted that they alone could send three thousand brave spearmen into the field, and lamented, that they should remain cooped up in dishonourable confinement, while their possessions fell a prey to an hostile invader. Their animated complaints inflamed the kindred ardour of the Athenian youth. It appeared unworthy of those, who had so often ravaged with impunity the territories of their neighbours, patiently to behold the desolation of their own. In-
 terested

interested priests announced approaching calamity; CHAP. sedition orators clamoured against the timid coun-
cils of Pericles; the impetuous youth required
their general to lead them to battle. Amidst this
popular commotion, the accomplished general and
statesman remained unmoved, bravely resisting the
storm, or dexterously eluding its force. Though
determined not to risk an engagement with the con-
federates, he seasonably employed the Athenian
and Thessalian cavalry to beat up their quarters,
to intercept their convoys, to harass, surprise, or
cut off their advanced parties. While these en-
terprises tended to divert or appease the tumult, a
fleet of an hundred and fifty sail ravaged the de-
fenceless coast of Peloponnesus. A squadron, less
numerous, made a descent on Locris. The re-
bellious inhabitants of Ægina were driven from
their possessions, and an Athenian colony was set-
tled in that island. The wretched fugitives, whose
country had long rivalled Athens itself in wealth,
commerce, and naval power, received the mari-
time district of Thyrea²⁶ from the bounty of their
Spartan protectors.

Intelligence of these proceedings, and still more
the scarcity of provisions, engaged the confederates
to return to their respective republics. Having
advanced by the eastern, they retired along the
western, frontier of Attica; every place in their line

The con-
federates
evacuate
Attica.

²⁶ This district lay on the frontier of the Argive and Lacedæ-
monian territory, and was long an object of contention between
those republics. See vol. i. p. 322, 323.

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Pericles
invades
Megara.

of march experiencing the fatal effects of their resentment or rapacity. Soon after their retreat, Pericles, towards the beginning of autumn, led out the Athenians to ravage the neighbouring and hostile province of Megara. The invading army was accidentally observed by the fleet, while it returned from the coast of Peloponnesus. The sailors hastened to share the danger and plunder. The whole Athenian force thus amounted to near twenty thousand men; a number far more than sufficient to deprive the industrious Megareans of the hope of a scanty harvest, earned with infinite toil and care, in their narrow unfruitful territory.

The winter was not distinguished by any important expedition on either side. The Corinthians, long inured to the sea in all seasons, carried on indecisive hostilities against the Athenian allies in Acarnania. During this inactive portion of the year, the Athenians, as well as their enemies, were employed in celebrating the memory of the dead, with much funeral pomp, and high encomiums on their valour²⁷; in distributing the prizes

²⁷ This mournful solemnity, as practised by the Athenians, is described by Thucydides, l. ii. p. 120, & seqq. The bones of the deceased were brought to a tabernacle previously erected for receiving them. On the day appointed for the funeral, they were conveyed from thence in cypress coffins, drawn on carriages, one for each tribe, to the public sepulchre in the Ceramicus, the most beautiful suburb of the city. The relations of the dead decked out the remains of their friends, as they judged most proper (See Lysias against Agoratus). One empty bier was drawn along in honour of those whose bodies had not been recovered. Persons of every age, and of either sex, citizens and strangers, attended this solemnity. When the bones were deposited in the earth, some citizen of dignity and merit,

prizes of merit among the surviving warriors; in confirming their respective alliances; and in fortifying such places on their frontier as seemed most exposed to military excursions, or naval descents.

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The return of summer brought back into Attica the Peloponnesian invaders; but it likewise introduced a far more dreadful calamity. A destructive pestilence, engendered in Æthiopia, infected Egypt, and spread over great part of the dominions of the king of Persia. History does not explain by what means this fatal disorder was communicated to Greece. The year had been in other respects remarkably healthful. As the disease first appeared in the Piræus, the principal Athenian harbour, we may be allowed to conjecture, that it was imported from the east, either by the Athenian merchantmen, or by the ships of war, which annually sailed to that quarter, in order to levy money on the tributary cities. When its miserable symptoms broke out in the Piræus, the inhabitants suspected that the enemy had poisoned their wells. But it soon extended over the adjoining districts, and raged

The
plague
breaks out
in Athens.
A.C. 330.

merit, named by the state, mounted a lofty pulpit, and pronounced the panegyric of the deceased, of their ancestors, and the Athenian republic. On this occasion, Pericles himself had been appointed to that solemn office. He performed it with great dignity. His speech, containing almost as many ideas as words, is incapable of abridgment; nor does its nature admit the insertion of it intire in the present history, in which eloquence is merely considered as an instrument of government, and such speeches only introduced as influenced public resolutions and measures. It is, however, worthy of observation, that his magnificent display of the advantages, the security, and the glory of Athens, forms a striking contrast with the unexpected calamities which soon overwhelmed his unhappy country.

with

C H A P. with peculiar violence in the populous streets which
 XV. furrounded the citadel.

Descrip-
 tion of that
 malady.

The malady appeared under various forms, in different constitutions; but its specific symptoms were invariably the same. It began with a burning heat in the head; the eyes were red and inflamed; the tongue and mouth had the colour of blood. The pain and inflammation descended to the breast with inexpressible anguish; the skin was covered with ulcers; the body of a livid red; the external heat not sensible to the touch, but the internal so violent, that the slightest covering could not be endured. An insatiable thirst was an universal symptom; and, when indulged, increased the disorder. When the bowels were attacked, the patient soon perished through debility. Some lived seven or nine days, and died of a fever, with apparent remains of strength. The life was saved, when the internal vigour diverted the course of the disease towards the extremities. Those who once recovered were never dangerously attacked a second time, from which they conceived a vain hope of proving thenceforth superior to every bodily infirmity. The disorder, which was always accompanied with an extreme dejection of spirits, often impaired the judgment, as well as the memory. All remedies, human and divine, were employed in vain to stop the progress of this fatal contagion. The miserable crowds expired in the temples, preferring unavailing prayers to the gods. A shocking spectacle was seen round the sacred fountains, where multitudes lay dead, or perished in agonising

Its effects
 on the
 mind.

nising torture. At length all medical assistance was despised²⁸, and all religious ceremonies neglected. Continually suffering or apprehending the most dreadful calamities, the Athenians became equally regardless of laws human and divine. The fleeting moment only was theirs. About the future they felt no concern, nor did they believe it of concern to the gods, since all alike perished, guilty or innocent. Decency no longer imposing respect, the only pursuit was that of present pleasure. To beings of an hour, the dread of punishment formed no restraint; to victims of misery, conscience presented no terrors. Athens thus exhibited at once whatever is most afflicting in wretchedness, and most miserable in vice, uniting to the rage of disease the more destructive fury of unbridled passions.

While the city fell a prey to these accumulated evils, the country was laid waste by an implacable enemy. On the present occasion, the confederates advanced beyond Athens; they destroyed the works of the miners on Mount Laurium; and, having

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on morals.

Devastation of Attica.
Olymp. lxxxvii. 3.
A. C. 430.

²⁸ The supposed decree of the Athenians in favour of Hippocrates, says, that his scholars shewed the means both of preventing and curing the plague. *Τις χρεη θεραπειαις ασφαλως διαφευξασθαι τον λοιπον*; and again, *Οπως τε ιατρικη δοθειςσα ασφαλως σωζει τις κκμνοντας*. Hippocrates, p. 1290. This decree therefore, as well as the letters of Hippocrates, mentioning the plague at Athens, are unquestionably spurious. The malady is minutely described by Thucydides, l. ii. c. xlvii. by Lucretius, l. vi. ver. 1136, & seqq. Diodorus, l. xii. differs widely from them both, probably having copied from Ephorus and Theopompus. Hippocrates has several cases of the plague from Thasos, Abdera, &c. but not one from Athens. See Hippocrat. de Morbis Epidem.

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ravaged all that southern district, as well as the coast opposite to Eubœa and Naxos, they traced a line of devastation along the Marathonian shore, the glorious scene of an immortal victory, obtained by the valour of Athens, in defence of those very states by which her own territories were now so cruelly desolated.

Magnanimity of
Pericles.

If conscious wisdom and rectitude were not superior to every assault of fortune, the manly soul of Pericles must have sunk under the weight of such multiplied calamities. But his fortitude still supported him amidst the flood of public and domestic woe. With decent and magnanimous composure, he beheld the unhappy fate of his numerous and flourishing family, successively snatched away by the rapacious pestilence. At the funeral of the last of his sons, he dropped, indeed, a few reluctant tears of paternal tenderness. But, ashamed of this momentary weakness, he bent his undejected mind to the defence of the republic. Having collected an hundred Athenian, together with fifty Chian or Lesbian vessels, he sailed through the Saronic gulph, and ravaged the unprotected coasts of Elis, Argos, and Laconia. While this armament weighed anchor in the Piræus, there happened an eclipse of the sun²⁹, which terrified the superstitious mariners, whose minds were already clouded by calamity. The pilot of the admiral galley betrayed the most unmanly cowardice, when

²⁹ Plutarch. in Pericle. But as Thucydides mentions no such eclipse that summer, although extremely attentive in recording such phenomena, I would not warrant the chronology of Plutarch.

Pericles,

Pericles, throwing a cloak before his eyes, asked, “whether the obscurity surpris’d him?” the pilot answering him in the negative, “Neither,” rejoined Pericles, “ought an eclipse of the sun, occasioned by the intervention of a revolving planet, which intercepts its light.”

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Having arrived on the Argolic coast, the Athenians laid siege to the sacred city Epidaurus, whose inhabitants gloried in the peculiar favour of Æsculapius. The plague again breaking out in the fleet, was naturally ascribed to the vengeance of that offended divinity. They raised the siege of Epidaurus; nor were their operations more successful against Troezené, Hermioné, and other Peloponnesian cities. They took only the small fortress of Prasiæ, a sea-port of Laconia; after which they returned to the Piræus, afflicted with the pestilence, and without having performed any thing that corresponded to the greatness of the armament, or the public expectation.

His unfortunate expedition to the Peloponnesus. Olymp. lxxxvii. 3. A.C. 430.

The Athenian expedition into Thrace was still more unfortunate. Into that country Agnon conducted a body of four thousand men, to co-operate with Phormio in the siege of Potidæa. But in the space of forty days, he lost one thousand and fifty men in the plague; and the only consequence of his expedition was, to infect the northern army with that melancholy disorder.

Athenians equally unfortunate in Thrace.

These multiplied disasters reduced the Athenians to despair. Their sufferings exceeded example and belief, while they were deprived of the only expected consolation, the pleasure of revenge. The

Pericles traduced.

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XV.

The magnanimous firmness of his last advice to the Athenians.

bulk of the people desired peace on any terms. Ambassadors were sent to Sparta, but not admitted to an audience. The orators clamoured, and traduced Pericles. The undiscerning populace ascribed their misfortunes to the unhappy effect of his councils; but his magnanimity did not yet forsake him, and, for the last time, he addressed the assembly: “Your anger, Athenians! occasions no surprise, because it comes not unexpected. Your complaints excite no resentment, because to complain is the right of the miserable. Yet as you mistake both the cause and the measure of your present calamity, I will venture to expose such dangerous, and, if not speedily corrected, such fatal errors. The justice and necessity of the war I have often had occasion to explain: it is just that you, who have protected and saved, should govern Greece; it is necessary, if you would assert your pre-eminence, that you should now resist the Peloponnesians. On maintaining this resolution, not your honour only, but your safety, depends. The sovereignty of Greece cannot, like an empty pageant of grandeur, be taken up with indifference, or without danger laid down. That well-earned dominion, which you have sometimes exercised tyrannically, must be upheld and defended, otherwise you must submit, without resource, to the resentment of your injured allies, and the animosity of your inveterate enemies. The hardships, to which you were exposed from the latter, I foresaw and foretold; the pestilence, that sudden and improbable disaster, it was impossible for human prudence to conjecture; yet great and

and unexpected as our calamities have been, and continue, they are still accidental and transitory, while the advantages of this necessary war are permanent, and its glory will be immortal. The greatness of that empire which we strive to uphold, extends beyond the territories of our most distant allies. Of the two elements, destined for the use of men, the sea and the land, we absolutely command the one, nor is there any kingdom, or republic, or confederacy, that pretends to dispute our dominion. Let this consideration elevate our hopes; and personal afflictions will disappear at the view of public prosperity. Let us bear, with resignation, the strokes of providence; and we shall repel, with vigour, the assaults of your enemies. It is the hereditary and glorious distinction of our republic, never to yield to adversity. We have defied danger, expended treasure and blood; and, amidst obstinate and formidable wars, augmented the power, and extended the fame, of a city unrivalled in wealth, populousness, and splendour, and governed by laws and institutions worthy its magnificence and renown. If Athens must perish, (as what human grandeur is not subject to decay?) let her never fall, at least, through *our* pusillanimity; a fall that would cancel the merit of our former virtue, and destroy at once that edifice of glory which it has been the work of ages to rear. When our walls and harbours are no more; when the terror of our navy shall have ceased, and our external magnificence fallen to decay, the glory of Athens shall remain. This is the prize which

CHAP. I have hitherto exhorted, and still exhort you to
 XV. defend, regardless of the clamours of sloth, the
 suspicions of cowardice, or the persecution of envy."

Death and
 character
 of Peri-
 cles.
 Olymp.
 lxxxvii. 4.
 A. C. 429.

Such were the sentiments of Pericles, who, on this occasion, declared to his assembled countrymen, with the freedom of conscious merit, that he felt himself inferior to none in wisdom to discover, and abilities to explain and promote, the measures most honourable and useful; that he was a sincere and ardent lover of the republic, unbiassed by the dictates of selfishness, unseduced by the allurements of partiality, and superior to the temptations of avarice. The anger of the Athenians evaporated in imposing on him a small fine, and soon after they re-elected him general. The integrity and manly firmness of his mind restored the fainting courage of the republic. They rescued the dignity of Pericles from the rage of popular frenzy; but they could not defend his life against the infectious malignity of the pestilence. He died two years and six months after the commencement of the war. The character which he draws of himself is confirmed by the impartial voice of history, which adds a few circumstances fitted to confirm the texture of a virtuous and lasting fame. During the first invasion of the Peloponnesians, he declared that he would convey his extensive and valuable estate to the public, if it should be excepted from the general devastation, by the policy or the gratitude of Archidamus, his hereditary guest and friend³⁰. Yet this generous patriot lived

³⁰ Thucyd. p. 108.

with the most exemplary œconomy in his personal and domestic expence. His death-bed was surrounded by his numerous admirers, who dwelt with complacence on the illustrious exploits of his glorious life. While they recounted the wisdom of his government, and enumerated the long series of his victories by sea and land, “ You forget,” said the dying statesman and sage, “ you forget the only valuable part of my character: none of my fellow-citizens was ever compelled, through any action of mine, to assume a mourning robe ³¹.” He expired, teaching an invaluable lesson to human kind, that in the last important hour, when all other objects disappear, or lose their value, the recollection of an innocent life is still present to the mind, and still affords consolation more valuable than Pericles could derive from his nine trophies erected over the enemies of his country, from his long and prosperous administration of forty years, the depth of his political wisdom, the perfection of his military and naval skill, and the immortal fame of his unrivalled eloquence.

³¹ Plut. in Pericl.

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Subsequent Events of the War.—Plataea taken.—Revolt of Lesbos.—Description and History of that Island.—Nature of its political Connection with Athens.—Address of Lesbos.—Its Capital besieged by the Athenians.—Measures of the Peloponnesians for relieving it.—Mitylené surrenders.—Deliberations in Athens concerning the Treatment of the Prisoners.—Resettlement of the Affairs of Lesbos.—The Corinthians foment Factions in Corcyra.—Sedition in that Island.—The contending Factions respectively supported by the Athenians and Peloponnesians.—Progress, Termination, and Consequences of the Sedition.

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Events of
the four
following
years of
the war.
Olymp.
lxxxvii. 4.
A. C. 429
—425.

THE dignity and vigour of the republic seemed to perish with Pericles, and several years elapsed scarcely distinguished by any event that tended to vary the uniformity, much less to decide the fortune of the war. While the Peloponnesians invaded Attica, the Athenian fleet annually ravaged the coast of Peloponnesus. In vain the inhabitants of that country, little accustomed to the sea, collected ships, and used their utmost endeavours to contend with the experienced skill of the Athenian mariners. They were always defeated, and often by an inferior force; one proof among many, that naval superiority is slowly acquired and

and slowly lost. Neither the Athenians nor the Peloponnesians derived any effectual assistance from their respective alliances with Sitalces and Perdiccas. The former, reinforced by many independent tribes of Thrace, who were allured to his standard by the hopes of plunder, poured down an hundred and fifty thousand men on the Macedonian coast. But a hasty agreement between the two kings dissipated that numerous and defultory band with the same rapidity with which it had been collected¹.

One benefit, indeed, the Athenians received from Sitalces, if that can be reckoned a benefit, which enabled them to commit an action of atrocious cruelty: he put into their hands Aristæus, the Corinthian, a bold and determined enemy of their republic; and actually travelling through Thrace into Persia, to solicit money from Artaxerxes to support the war against them. Both Aristæus and his colleagues in the embassy suffered a painful and ignominious death.

The success of the adverse parties was equally balanced in the sieges of Potidæa and Platæa. The former, having surrendered on capitulation, was occupied by new inhabitants. The expelled citizens retired to Olynthus and other places of the Chalcidicé, where they strengthened and exasperated the foes of Athens. Platæa also capitulated, after a long and spirited resistance during five years. Notwithstanding the warm and affecting remon-

Taking of
Potidæa:
Olymp.
lxxxvii. 4.
A. C. 429.

Of Platæa.
Olymp.
lxxxviii. 2.
A. C. 427.

¹ Thucyd. p. 167—170:

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strances of the citizens who had acted such an illustrious part in the Persian war, when the Thebans behaved most disgracefully, the capitulation was shamefully violated by the Spartans, who sacrificed to the resentment of Thebes, the eternal enemy of Platæa, two hundred brave men, whose courage and fidelity merited a better fate. But the youth of Platæa still flourished in the bosom of Athens, and were destined, in a future age, to reassume the dignity of independent government, which always formed the highest ambition of their small but magnanimous community.

Revolt of
Lesbos.

Among the transactions of this otherwise unimportant period, happened the revolt of Lesbos, and the sedition of Corcyra. Both events deeply affected the interest of Athens; and the former is distinguished by such circumstances as serve to explain the political condition of the times, while the latter exhibits a striking but gloomy picture of Grecian manners.

Description and
history of
that island.

The island of Lesbos, extending above an hundred and fifty miles in circumference, is the largest, except Eubœa, in the Ægean sea. Originally planted by Eolians, Lesbos was the mother of many Eolic colonies. They were established on the opposite continent, and separated from their metropolis by a strait of seven miles, which expands itself into the gulf of Thebe, and is beautifully diversified by the Hecatonnesian and Arginussian isles, of old sacred to Apollo. The happy temperature of the climate of Lesbos conspired with the rich fertility of the soil to produce those
delicious

delicious fruits, and those exquisite wines, which are still acknowledged by modern travellers to deserve the encomiums so liberally bestowed on them by ancient writers ². The convenience of its harbours furnished another source of wealth and advantage to this delightful island, which, as early as the age of Homer, was reckoned populous and powerful, and, like the rest of Greece at that time, governed by the moderate jurisdiction of hereditary princes. The abuse of royal power occasioned the dissolution of monarchy in Lesbos, as well as in the neighbouring isles. The rival cities of Mitylené and Methymna contended for republican pre-eminence. The former prevailed; and having reduced Methymna, as well as six cities of inferior note, began to extend its dominion beyond the narrow bounds of the island, and conquered a considerable part of Troas. Meanwhile the internal government of Mitylené was often disturbed by sedition, and sometimes usurped by tyrants. The wise Pittacus, contemporary and rival of Solon, endeavoured to remedy these evils by giving his countrymen a body of laws, comprised in six hundred verses, which adjusted their political rights, and regulated their behaviour and manners. The Lesbians afterwards underwent those general revolutions, to which both the islands and the continent of Asia Minor were exposed from the Lydian and Persian power. Delivered from the yoke of Per-

² Mons. de Guys, Tournefort, &c. agree with Horace (*passim*) and Strabo, l. xiii. p. 584—657. from which the following particulars, in the text, concerning Lesbos, are extracted.

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XVI.

sia by the successful valour of Athens and Sparta, the Lesbians, as well as all the Greek settlements around them, spurned the tyrannical authority of Sparta and Pausanias, and ranged themselves under the honourable colours of Athens, which they thenceforth continued to respect in peace, and to follow in war.

Nature of
its politi-
cal con-
nection
with
Athens.

In the exercise of power the Athenians displayed principles totally different from those by which they had attained it. The confederacy between Athens and Lesbos was still supported, however, by mutual fear rather than by reciprocal affection. During peace, the Lesbians dreaded the navy of Athens; the Athenians feared to lose the assistance of Lesbos in war. Besides this, the Athenians were of the Ionic, the Lesbians of the Eolic, race; and the latter justly regretted that the allies of Athens should be successively reduced to the condition of subjects. They perceived the artful policy of that republic in allowing the Chians and Lesbians alone to retain the semblance of liberty. While the Chians and Lesbians, still free in appearance, assisted in subduing the other confederates of Athens, that ambitious republic was always furnished with a plausible justification of her general oppression and tyranny; since it was natural to imagine that men, left to the unrestrained liberty of choice, should, in matters indifferent to themselves, prefer the cause of justice to that of usurpation. But even the apparent freedom which the Lesbians enjoyed had become extremely precarious. They felt themselves under the disagreeable necessity to
footh,

footh, to bribe, and to flatter the Athenian demagogues, and in all their transactions with that imperious people, to testify the most mortifying deference and submission. Notwithstanding their watchful attention never designedly to offend, they were continually endangered by the quarrelsome humour of a capricious multitude, and had reason to dread, lest, in consequence of some unexpected gust of passion, they should be compelled to demolish their walls, and to surrender their shipping, the punishments already inflicted on such of the neighbouring islands as had incurred the displeasure of Athens.

This uneasy situation naturally disposed the Lesbians, amidst the calamities of the second Peloponnesian invasion, heightened by the plague at Athens, to watch an opportunity to revolt. The following year was employed in assembling the scattered inhabitants of the island within the walls of Mitylené, in strengthening these walls, in fortifying their harbours, in augmenting their fleet, and in collecting troops and provisions from the fertile shores of the Euxine sea. But in the fourth year of the war, their design, yet unripe for execution, was made known to the Athenians by the inhabitants of Tenedos, the neighbours and enemies of Lesbos, as well as by the citizens of Methymna, the ancient rival of Mitylené, and by several malcontents in the Lesbian capital. Notwithstanding the concurrence of such powerful testimonies, the Athenian magistrates affected to disbelieve intelligence which their distressed circumstances rendered

pecu-

Measures
of the Lesbians previous to their revolt.

Olymp.
lxxxviii. 1.
A. C. 428.

CHAP. XVI. peculiarly alarming. The Lesbians, it was said, could never think of forsaking the alliance of a country, which had always treated them with such distinguished favour, how powerfully soever they might be urged to that measure by the Thebans, their Eolian brethren, and the Spartans, their ancient confederates. Ambassadors, however, were sent to Lesbos, desiring an explanation of rumours so dishonourable to the fidelity and gratitude of the island.

Activity of
Athens.

The ambassadors having confirmed the report, Athens equipped a fleet of forty sail, intending to attack the enemy by surprise, while they celebrated, with universal consent, the anniversary festival of Apollo, on the promontory of Malea. But this design was rendered abortive by the diligence of a Mitylenian traveller, who, passing from Athens to Eubœa, proceeded southward to Geraistos, and, embarking in a merchant-vessel, reached Lesbos in less than three days from the time that he undertook this important service. His seasonable advice not only prevented the Mitylenians from leaving their city, but prepared them to appear, at the arrival of the enemy, in a tolerable posture of defence. This state of preparation enabled them to obtain from Cleippidas, the Athenian admiral, a suspension of hostilities, until they dispatched an embassy to Athens, to remove, as they pretended, the groundless resentment of the people, and to give ample satisfaction to the magistrates.

Address of
Lesbos.

On the part of the Lesbians, this transaction was nothing more than a contrivance to gain time.

They

They expected no favour or forgiveness from the Athenian assembly; and while this illusive negotiation was carrying on at Athens, other ambassadors went secretly to Sparta, requesting that the Lesbians might be admitted into the Peloponnesian confederacy, and thus entitled to the protection of that powerful league. The Spartans referred them to the general assembly, which was to be soon held at Olympia, to solemnize the most splendid of all the Grecian festivals. After the games were ended, and the Athenians, who little expected that such matters were in agitation, had returned home, the Lesbian ambassadors were favourably heard in a general convention of the Peloponnesian representatives or deputies, from whom they received assurance of immediate and effectual assistance.

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Olymp.
lxxxviii. 1.
A. C. 428.

This promise, however, was not punctually performed. The eyes of the Athenians were at length opened; and while the Peloponnesians prepared or deliberated, their more active enemies had already taken the field. Various skirmishes, in which the islanders shewed little vigour in their own defence, engaged the neighbouring states of Lemnos and Imbros to send, on the first summons, considerable supplies of troops to their Athenian confederates; but as the combined forces were still insufficient completely to invest Mitylené, a powerful reinforcement was sent from Athens; and before the beginning of winter, the place was blocked up by land, while an Athenian fleet occupied the harbour.

Mitylené
besieged.

The unfavourable season, and still more, that dilatoriness which so often obstructed the measures

Measures
of the
Pelopon-

of

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nesians for
relieving
it.

of the confederates, prevented timely aid from arriving at Mitylené. But in order to make a diversion in favour of their new allies, the Peloponnesians assembled a considerable armament at the isthmus, intending to convey their ships over land from Corinth to the sea of Athens, that they might thus infest the Athenian shores with their fleet, while the army carried on its usual ravages in the central parts of Attica. The activity of the Athenians defeated this design. Notwithstanding their numerous squadrons on the coasts of Peloponnesus, Thrace, and Lesbos, they immediately fitted out an hundred sail to defend their own shores. The Peloponnesian sailors, who had been hastily collected from the maritime towns, soon became disgusted with an expedition, attended with unforeseen difficulties; and, as autumn advanced, the militia from the inland country grew impatient to return to their fields and vineyards. During winter, the Mitylenians were still disappointed in their hope of relief. They were encouraged, however, to persevere in resistance, by the arrival of Salæthus, a Spartan general of considerable merit, who having landed in an obscure harbour of the island, travelled by land towards Mitylené; and, during the obscurity of night, passed the Athenian wall of circumvallation, by favour of a breach made by a torrent. Salæthus gave the besieged fresh assurances that a powerful fleet would be sent to their assistance early in the spring; and that, at the same time, the Athenians should be harassed by

by an invasion more terrible and destructive than any which they had yet experienced.

The latter part of the promise was indeed performed. The Peloponnesians invaded Attica. Whatever had been spared in former incursions, now fell a prey to their fury. But after the spring was considerably advanced, the long-expected fleet was looked for in vain. The same procrastination and difficulties still retarded the preparations of the confederates; and when at length forty sail were collected, the command was bestowed on the Spartan Alcidas, a man totally devoid of that spirit and judgment essential to the character of a naval commander. Instead of sailing directly to the relief of Mitylené, he wasted much precious time in pursuing the Athenian merchantmen, in harassing the unfortified islands, and in alarming the defenceless and unwarlike inhabitants of Ionia, who could scarcely recover from their astonishment, at seeing a Peloponnesian fleet in those seas. Many trading vessels, that sailed between the numerous islands and harbours on that extensive coast, fell into the hands of Alcidas; for when they descried his squadron, they attempted not to avoid it; many fearlessly approached it, as certainly Athenian. In consequence of this imprudence, Alcidas took a great number of prisoners, whom he butchered in cold blood at Myonesus.

This barbarity only disgraced himself, and injured the Spartan cause in Asia, many cities of which were previously ripe for revolt. Before he attempted to accomplish the main object

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Imprudent
conduct
of Alcidas.
Olymp.
lxxxviii.2.
A.C.427.

Mitylené
surrenders.
Olymp.
lxxxviii.2.
A.C.427.

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of his expedition, the opportunity was for ever lost by the surrender of Mitylené. Despair of assistance, and scarcity of provisions, had obliged Salæthus, who began himself by this time to suspect that the Peloponnesians had laid aside all thoughts of succouring the place, to arm³ the populace, in order to make a vigorous assault on the Athenian lines. But the lower ranks of men, who in Lesbos, as well as in all the Grecian isles, naturally favoured the cause of Athens, the avowed patron of democracy, no sooner received their armour, than they refused obeying their superiors, and threatened, that unless the corn were speedily brought to the market-place, and equally divided among all the citizens, they would instantly submit to the besiegers. The aristocratical party prudently yielded to the torrent of popular fury, which they had not strength to resist; and justly apprehensive, lest a more obstinate defence might totally exclude them from the benefit of capitulation, they surrendered to Paches, the Athenian commander, on condition that none of the prisoners should be enslaved or put to death, until their agents, who were immediately sent to implore the clemency of Athens, should return with the sentence of that republic.

Terror of
the Lesbian
captives.

The terms were accepted and ratified; but such were the furious resentments which prevailed in that age, such the dark suspicions, and such the

³ He gave the populace, who were before light armed, heavy armour. Thucyd. p. 188. English cannot imitate his expression: ἐπλᾶξει τῶν ὀπλιτῶν προτέρον ψιλῶν οὐκ ἔτι.

total disregard to all laws of justice and humanity, that the Athenian army had no sooner taken possession of the place, than the chief authors and abettors of the revolt, judging it imprudent to trust their safety to the faith of treaties, and the sanctity of oaths, flew for protection to their temples and altars. This unseasonable diffidence (for Paches appears to have united uncommon humanity with a daring spirit, and great military abilities) discovered conscious guilt, and enabled the Athenians to distinguish between their friends and enemies. The latter were protected by Paches, and prevailed on to withdraw from their sanctuaries. He afterwards sent them to the isle of Tenedos, until their fate, as well as that of their fellow-citizens, should be finally determined by the Athenian republic.

Immediately after the arrival of the Mitylenian ambassadors, the people of Athens had assembled to deliberate on this important subject. Agitated by the giddy transports of triumph over the rebellious ingratitude and perfidy of a people, who, though distinguished by peculiar favours, had abandoned and betrayed their protectors in the season of danger, the Athenians doomed to death all the Mitylenian citizens, and condemned the women and children to perpetual servitude. In one day the bill was proposed, the decree passed, and the same evening a galley was dispatched to Paches, conveying this cruel and bloody resolution. But the night left room for reflection; and the feelings of humanity were awakened by the stings of remorse. In the morning, having assem-

They are
doomed to
death by
an Athe-
nian de-
cree.

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bled, as usual, in the public square, men were surprised and pleased to find the sentiments of their neighbours exactly corresponding with their own. Their dejected countenances met each other; they lamented, with one accord, the rashness and ferocity of their passion, and bewailed the unhappy fate of Mitylené, the destined object of their misguided frenzy. The Mitylenian ambassadors availed themselves of this sudden change of sentiment; a new assembly was convened, and the question submitted to a second deliberation.

Character
of Cleon.

A turbulent impetuous eloquence had raised the audacious profligacy of Cleon, from the lowest rank of life, to a high degree of authority in the Athenian assembly. The multitude were deceived by his artifices, and pleased with his frontless impudence, which they called boldness, and manly openness of character. His manners they approved in proportion as they resembled their own; and the worst of his vices found advocates among the dupes of his pretended patriotism. This violent demagogue, whose arrogant⁴ presumption so unworthily succeeded the enlightened magnanimity of Pericles, had, in the former assembly, proposed and carried the sanguinary decree against Mitylené. He still persevered in supporting that atrocious measure, and upbraided the weak and wavering

⁴ The character of Cleon, sketched in miniature by Thucydides, pp. 193 and 266. is painted at full length by Aristophanes, in his comedy of the *Ἱππεις*, "The Horsemen." Yet we could not safely trust the description of the angry satirist, who bore a personal grudge to Cleon, unless the principal strokes were justified by the impartial narrative of Thucydides.

counsels

counsels of his countrymen, liable to be shaken by every gust of passion, and totally incapable of that stability essential in the management of great affairs, and particularly indispensable in the government of distant dependencies.

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“ Such a temper of mind (he had often ventured to declare, and would repeat the same disagreeable truth as often as their folly obliged him) was alike unworthy, and incapable, of command. That a democracy was unfit for sovereign rule, past experience convinced him, and the present instance now confirmed his opinion. The empire of Athens could not be maintained without an undivided attachment, an unalterable adherence, to the interest and honour of the republic. But the masters of Greece were the slaves of their own capricious passions; excited at will by the perfidious voice of venal speakers, bribed to betray them. Lulled to a fatal repose by the softness of melodious words, they forgot the dignity of the state, and restrained their personal resentment against multiplied and unprovoked injuries. What was still more dangerous, they invited, by an ill-judged lenity, the imitation and continuance of such crimes as must terminate in public disgrace and inevitable ruin. What else can be expected from pardoning the aggravated guilt of Mitylené? Encouraged by this weakness, must not the neighbouring cities and islands, whose resources form the principal vigour of the republic, greedily seize the first opportunity of shaking off the yoke, which they have long reluctantly borne; and follow the example of a revolt, which, without

Cleon en-
forces that
decree.

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Deodatus
opposes it
with equal
address
and spirit.

presenting them with the fear of danger, promised them the hope of deliverance ?”

This sanguinary speech was answered by Deodatus, a man endowed with an amiable moderation of character, joined to a profound knowledge of government, and a deep insight into human nature. In the former assembly, this respectable orator had ventured, almost single and alone, to plead the cause of the Mitylenians, and to assert the rights of humanity. He observed, “ that assemblies were liable to be misled by the fury of resentment, as well as by the weakness of compassion ; and that errors of the former kind were often attended by consequences not less destructive, and always followed by a far more bitter repentance. Against vague slanders and calumny no man is secure ; but a true patriot must learn to despise such unmanly reproaches. Undaunted by opposition, he will offer good counsel, to which there are no greater enemies than haste and anger. For my part, I stand up neither to defend the Mitylenians, nor to waste time in fruitless accusations. They have injured us most outrageously, yet I would not advise you to butcher them, unless *that* can be proved expedient ; neither, were they objects of forgiveness, would I advise you to pardon them^s, unless that were conducive to the public interest, the only point on which our present deliberation turns. Guided by vulgar prejudices, Cleon has

^s This is speaking like an orator. It will appear in the sequel, that Deodatus by no means considered the innocence or guilt of the Mitylenians as things indifferent.

loudly

loudly asserted, that the destruction of the Mitylenians is necessary to deter neighbouring cities from rebellion. But distant subjects must be kept in obedience by the mildness of discretionary caution, not by the rigour of sanguinary examples. What people were ever so mad as to revolt, without expecting, either through their domestic strength, or the assistance of foreign powers, to make good their pretensions? Men who have known liberty, how sweet it is, ought not to be punished too severely for aspiring at that inestimable enjoyment. But their growing disaffection must be watched with care, and anticipated by diligence; they must be prevented from taking the first steps towards emancipation; and taught, if possible, to regard it as a thing altogether unattainable.

“ Yet such is the nature of man, considered either individually or collectively, that a law of infallible prevention will never be enacted. Of all crimes that any reasonable creature can commit, Desire is the forerunner, and Hope the attendant. These invisible principles within, are too powerful for all external terrors; nor has the increasing severity of laws rendered crimes less frequent in latter times, than during the mildness of the heroic ages, when few punishments were capital. While human nature remains the same, weakness will be distrustful, necessity will be daring, poverty will excite injustice, power will urge to rapacity, misery will sink into meanness, and prosperity swell into presumption. There are other

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contingencies, which stir up the mutiny of passions, too stubborn for controul. The authority of government can neither change the combination of events, nor interrupt the occasions of fortune. Impelled by such causes, the selfish desires of men will hurry them into wickedness and vice, whatever penalties await them. The imagination becomes familiar with one degree of punishment, as well as with another; and, in every degree, hope renders it alike ineffectual and impotent; since neither individuals nor communities would be guilty of injustice, if they believed that it must infallibly subject them to punishment, small or great. When individuals commit crimes, they always expect to elude the vengeance of law. When communities rebel, they expect to render their revolt not the occasion of triumph to their enemies, but the means of their own deliverance and security.

“ The severe punishment of Mitylené cannot, therefore, produce the good consequences with which Cleon has flattered you. But this cruel measure will be attended with irreparable prejudice to your interest. It will estrange the affections of your allies; provoke the resentment of Greece; excite the indignation of mankind; and, instead of preventing rebellion, render it more frequent and more dangerous. When all hopes of success have vanished, your rebellious subjects will never be persuaded to return to their duty. They will seek death in the field rather than await it from the hand of the executioner. Though reduced
to

to the last extremity, they will spurn submission, and gathering courage from despair, either repel your assaults, or fall an useless prey, weak and exhausted, incapable of indemnifying you for the expence of the war, or of raising those subsidies and contributions, which rendered their subjugation a reasonable object either of interest or ambition.

“ The revolt of Mitylené was the work of an aristocratical faction, fomented by the Lacedæmonians and Thebans. The great body of the people were no sooner provided with arms, than they discovered their affection for Athens. It would be most cruel and most ungrateful, to confound the innocent with the guilty, to involve friends and foes in undistinguished ruin. Yet this odious measure would shew more weakness than cruelty, more folly than injustice. What advantage could the enemies of Athens more earnestly desire? What boon could the aristocratical factions, so profusely scattered over Greece, more anxiously request from Heaven? Furnished with your sanguinary decree against Mitylené, they might for ever alienate from the republic the affections of her subjects and confederates; for having once seduced them to revolt, they might unanswerably convince them, that safety could only be purchased by persevering in rebellion, and that to return to duty was to submit to death.”

The moderation and good sense of Deodatus (such was the influence of Cleon) were approved only by a small majority of voices. Yet it remained uncertain, whether this late and reluctant

repent-

His opinion prevails.

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repentance would avail the Mitylenians, who, before any advice of it arrived, might be condemned and executed in consequence of the former decree. A galley was instantly furnished with every thing that might promote expedition. The Mitylenian deputies promised invaluable rewards to the rowers. But the fate of a numerous, and lately flourishing community, still depended on the uncertainty of winds and currents. The first advice-boat had failed, as the messenger of bad news, with a slow and melancholy progress. The second advanced with the rapid movement of joy. Not an adverse blast opposed her course. The necessity of food and sleep never restrained a moment the labour of the oar: and her diligence was rewarded by reaching Lesbos in time to check the cruel hand of the executioner.

Narrow
escape of
the Mity-
lenians.

The bloody sentence had been just read, even the orders had been issued for its execution, when the critical arrival of the Athenian galley converted the lamentable outcries, or gloomy despair of a whole republic, into expressions of admiration and gratitude.

Refettle-
ment of
affairs in
Lesbos.
Olymp.
lxxxviii.2.
A.C.427.

The punishment, however, of Mitylené was still sufficiently severe, even according to the rigorous maxims of Grecian policy. The prisoners, who had been sent to Tenedos, were transported to Athens. They exceeded a thousand in number, and were indiscriminately condemned to death. Salæthus, the Spartan general, shared the same fate, after descending to many mean contrivances to save his life. The walls of Mitylené

were demolished, its shipping was sent to Athens, and its territory divided into three thousand portions, of which three hundred were consecrated to the gods, and the rest distributed by lot among the people of Athens. The Lesbians were still allowed to cultivate, as tenants, their own fields, paying for each share an annual-rent of about six pounds nine shillings sterling⁶.

The activity and judgment of Paches thus effected an important conquest to his country. Though the affairs of Lesbos might have required his undivided attention, he no sooner was apprised of the appearance of the Peloponnesian fleet, than he immediately put to sea, protected the allies of Athens, and chased the enemy from those shores. During the whole time of his command, he behaved with firmness tempered by humanity. But, at his return to Athens, he met with the usual reward of superior merit. He was accused of misconduct; and finding sentence ready to be pronounced against him, his indignation rose so high, that he slew himself in court⁷.

Merit and
persecu-
tion of
Paches.

The Spartan admiral, Alcidas, met, on the other hand, with a reception (such is the blindness of popular prejudice!) far better than his behaviour deserved. The Peloponnesian fleet of forty sail, imprudently intrusted to his command, retired ingloriously, after a most expensive and fruitless expedition, to the protection of their friendly harbours. A northerly wind, however, drove them

Opera-
tions of
the Spar-
tan fleet.

⁶ Thucyd. p. 173—206.

⁷ Plutarch, in Nicia, & in Aristid.

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on the shores of Crete; from whence they dropped in successively to the port of Cyllené, which had recovered the disaster inflicted on it by the Corcyreans at the beginning of the war, and become the ordinary rendezvous of the Peloponnesian fleet. In this place, Alcidas found thirteen galleys, commanded by Brasidas, a Spartan of distinguished valour and abilities, purposely chosen to assist the admiral with his counsels. This small squadron had orders to join the principal armament; with which the confederates, as their design had miscarried at Lesbos, purposed to undertake an expedition to Corcyra, then agitated by the tumult of a most dangerous sedition.

Intrigues
of the Co-
rinthians
with the
Corcyrean
prisoners,

Among the hostilities already related between the republics of Corinth and Corcyra, we described the enterprises by which the Corinthians took above twelve hundred Corcyrean prisoners. Many of these persons were descended from the first families in the island; a circumstance on which the policy of Corinth founded an extensive plan of artifice and ambition. The Corcyreans, instead of feeling the rigours of captivity, or experiencing the stern severity of republican resentment, were treated with the liberal and endearing kindness of Grecian hospitality. Having acquired their confidence by good offices, the Corinthians insinuated to them, in the unguarded hours of convivial merriment, the danger as well as the disgrace of their connection with Athens, the universal tyrant of her allies; and represented their shameful ingratitude in deserting Corinth, to which the colony of Corcyra owed

owed not only its early happiness and prosperity, but its original establishment and existence. These arguments, seasonably repeated, and urged with much address, at length proved effectual. The Corcyreans recovered their freedom, and returned to their native country; and while they pretended to be collecting the sum of eight hundred talents (about an hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling) to pay their ransom, they left nothing untried to detach Corcyra from the Athenian interest.

Their first expedient for accomplishing this purpose was, to traduce the popular leaders, who were the most steadfast partizans of that republic. Accusations, impeachments, all the artifices and chicane of legal persecution, were directed and played off against them. The demagogues, who were not of a temper to brook such injuries, retorted on their antagonists with equal ingenuity, and far superior success. Peithias, the most distinguished advocate of the Athenian or democratic party, accused five ringleaders of the opposite faction of having destroyed the fence which inclosed the grove of Jupiter; a trespass estimated by the Corcyrean law at a severe pecuniary punishment^s. In vain the persons accused denied the charge; in vain, after conviction before the senate, they fled as supplicants to the altars. They could obtain no mitigation of the amercement. The

excited dangerous
factions in
Corcyra.

^s The fine was, for every pale a stater (one pound and nine pence sterling). Such causes were frequent in other parts of Greece, as we learn from the oration of Lyfias in defence of a citizen accused of cutting down a consecrated olive. See the translation of Lyfias and Isocrates, p. 377.

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demagogue was inflexible; and his influence with his colleagues in the senate, of which he happened that year to be a member, determined them to execute the law in its utmost rigour.

Assassina-
tion of the
dema-
gogues.

Exasperated by this severity, and not doubting that during the administration of the present senate, many similar prosecutions would be raised against them, the aristocratical party entered into a conspiracy for defending themselves and their country against the oppressive injustice of Athens and Athenian partizans. On this emergency they acted like men who knew the danger of delay. Having fortified their cause with a sufficient number of adherents, they armed themselves with concealed daggers, suddenly rushed into the senate-house, and assassinated Peithias, with sixty of his friends. This boldness struck their opponents with terror. Such persons as felt themselves most obnoxious to the conspirators, immediately fled to the harbour, embarked, and sailed to Athens.

Sedition in
Corcyra.
Olymp.
lxxxviii.2.
A. C. 427.

The people of Corcyra, thus deprived of their leaders by an event equally unexpected and atrocious, were seized with such astonishment as suspended their power of action. Before they had sufficiently recovered themselves to take the proper measures for revenge, or even for defence, the arrival of a Corinthian vessel, and a Lacedæmonian embassy, encouraged their opponents to attempt their destruction. The attack was made at the hour of full assembly; the forum, or public square, presented a scene of horror; the streets of Corcyra streamed with blood. The unguarded citizens

were

were incapable of making resistance against such sudden and unforeseen fury. They fled in trepidation from the forum, and the more spacious streets. Some took possession of the citadel; others of the Hillæan harbour; and in general occupied, before evening, the higher and more remote parts of the town. Their adversaries kept possession of the market-place, around which most of their houses stood, or assembled in the principal harbour, that points towards Epirus, from which they expected succour. The day following was spent in doubtful skirmishes, and in summoning from the country the assistance of the peasants, or rather slaves, by whom chiefly the lands of the island were cultivated. These naturally ranged themselves on the side of the people: the Corcyrean women zealously embraced the same party, and sustained the tumult with more than female courage. One inactive day intervened. The partizans of aristocracy were reinforced by eight hundred auxiliaries from the continent of Epirus. But in the succeeding engagement, the numbers and fury of the slaves, who seized the present opportunity to resent the barbarous cruelty of their respective masters, and the generous ardour of the women, rendered the friends of liberty completely victorious. The vanquished fled towards the forum and the great harbour. Even these posts they soon despaired of being able to maintain; and, to escape immediate death, set fire to the surrounding houses, which being soon thrown into a blaze, presented an impervious obstacle to the rage of the assailants.

The

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The most beautiful part of Corcyra was thus destroyed in one night; the houses, shops, magazines, and much valuable merchandise, were totally consumed; and had an easterly wind aided the conflagration, the whole city must in a short time have been reduced to ashes. Amidst this scene of confusion and horror, the Corinthian galley, together with the auxiliaries from Epirus, retired in consternation from a place that seemed doomed to inevitable destruction.

An Athenian squadron arrives at Corcyra.

Next day twelve Athenian galleys arrived from Naupactus, containing, besides their ordinary complement of men, five hundred heavy-armed Messenians. Nicostratus, who commanded this armament, had, upon the first intelligence of the sedition, hastened with the utmost celerity to support the cause of Athens and democracy. He had the good fortune not only to anticipate the Peloponnesian squadron, which was so anxiously expected by the enemy, but to find his friends triumphant. They had obtained, however, a melancholy triumph over the splendour of their country, which, if its factions were not speedily reconciled, was threatened with total ruin. Nicostratus omitted nothing that seemed proper to heal the wounds of that afflicted commonwealth. By authority, entreaties, and commands, he persuaded the contending parties to accommodate matters between themselves, and to renew their alliance with Athens. Having happily terminated this business, he was intent on immediate departure; but the managers for the people proposed, that he should leave five
of

of his ships with them, to deter the enemy from any fresh commotion, and take in exchange five of theirs, which should be instantly manned to attend him on his station. With this proposal he complied; and the Corcyreans selected the mariners destined to sail with Nicostratus. Those named for this service were, to a man, partizans of the oligarchy and Lacedæmon: a circumstance which created in them just alarm, lest they should be transported to Athens, and, notwithstanding the faith of treaties, condemned to death. They took refuge in the temple of Castor and Pollux: the assurances of Nicostratus could scarcely remove them from this sanctuary; and all his declarations and oaths were incapable to prevail on them to embark. The opposite party asserted, that this want of confidence betrayed not only the consciousness of past, but the fixed purpose of future, guilt; and would have immediately dispatched them with their daggers, had not Nicostratus interposed. Terrified at these proceedings, the unhappy victims of popular malice and suspicion assembled, to the number of four hundred, and retired with one accord, as supplicants, to the temple of Juno. From this sanctuary they were persuaded to arise, and transported to a neighbouring island, or rather rock, small, barren, and uninhabited. There they remained four days, supplied barely with the means of subsistence, and impatiently waiting their fate.

In this posture of affairs a numerous fleet was seen approaching from the south. This was the long-expected squadron of fifty-three ships com-

The Peloponnesian fleet appears off the coast.

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manded by Alcidas and Brasidas. With the unfortunate slowness inherent in all the measures of the confederacy, this armament arrived too late to support the ruined cause of their friends. The Peloponnesian commanders, however, might still expect to take an useless but agreeable vengeance on their enemies. To accomplish this design they prepared to attack the harbour of Corcyra, while all was hurry and confusion. The islanders had sixty vessels fit for sea, in which they embarked with the utmost expedition, and successively sailed forth as each happened to be ready. Their ardour and impatience disdained the judicious advice of Nicostratus, who alone, calm and unmoved amidst a scene of unexpected danger, exhorted them to keep the harbour until they were all prepared to advance in line of battle, generously offering, with his twelve Athenian galleys, to sustain the first assaults of the enemy.

A sea-fight,
in which
the Peloponnesians
prevail.

The Peloponnesians, observing the hostile armament scattered and unsupported, divided their own fleet into two squadrons. The one, consisting of twenty galleys, attacked the Corcyreans; the other, amounting to thirty-three, endeavoured to surround the Athenians. But the address of the Athenian mariners frustrated this attempt. Their front was extended with equal order and celerity. They assaulted, at once, the opposite wings of the Peloponnesian fleet, intercepted their motion, and skillfully encircled them around, hoping to drive their ships against each other, and to throw them into universal disorder. Perceiving these manœuvres,

the

the ships which followed the Corcyreans left off the pursuit, and steered to support the main squadron: and now, with their whole embodied strength, they prepared to pour on the Athenians. These prudently declined the shock of superior force: but the glory of their retreat was equal to a victory. They seasonably shifted their helms, slowly and regularly gave way, and thus covered the retreat of their Corcyrean allies, who, having already lost thirteen vessels, were totally unable to renew the engagement.

Having reached the harbour, the Corcyreans still feared lest the enemy, in pursuance of their victory, should make a descent on the coast, and even assault the city. But the manly counsels of Brasidas, who strongly recommended the latter measure, were defeated by the timidity and incapacity of Alcidas. The Corcyreans seized, therefore, the present opportunity to remove the supplicants from the uninhabited island to the temple of Juno, as less exposed there, to be discovered and taken up by the Peloponnesian fleet. Next day they entered into accommodation with these unhappy men, and even admitted several of them to embark in thirty vessels, which they hastily equipped, as the last defence of the island. The Peloponnesians, meanwhile, still prevented, by the dastardly counsels of Alcidas, from attacking the capital, wrecked their resentment on the adjacent territory. But before the dawn of the succeeding day, they were alarmed by lights on the northern shore of Leucadia, which, by their number and

The mis-
conduct of
Alcidas
saves Cor-
cyra.

C H A P. disposition, signified the approach of an Athenian
XVI. fleet of sixty sail.

The Athenians reinforced. The situation of the invaders was now extremely dangerous. If they stretched out to sea, they might be obliged to encounter the unbroken vigour of the Athenians: if they cruised off the coast, they would be compelled to contend, not only with the power of Athens, but with the resentment of Corcyra. One measure alone promised the hope of safety: it was immediately adopted. Having crept along the shore to Leucadia, they carried their vessels across the isthmus⁹, afterwards buried in the sea, but which then joined the peninsula, now the island of Leucas, to the adjacent coast of Acarnania. From thence sailing through the narrow seas, which separate the neighbouring isles from the continent, they escaped without discovery, and safely arrived in the harbour of Cylléné.

The Peloponnesians retire from Corcyra. The democratical party in Corcyra soon perceived the flight of the enemy, and descried the approach of the Athenian fleet, commanded by Eurymedon. These fortunate events, which ought in generous minds to have effaced the dark impressions of enmity and revenge, only enabled the Corcyreans to display the deep malignity of their character. They commanded the thirty gallies, recently manned, to pass in review, and in proportion as they discovered their enemies, punished them with immediate death. Fifty of the principal citizens, who still clung to the altars in the temple

Massacre of the Lacedæmonian partisans.

⁹ D'Anville considers the ancient Leucadia as an island; Ptolemy speaks of it as a peninsula.

of Juno, they seduced from their asylum, and instantly butchered.

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Malignant
passions of
the Corcy-
reans.

Politics and party formed the pretence for violence, while individuals gratified their private passions, and wrecked vengeance on their personal foes. The sedition became every hour more fierce: the confusion thickened; the whole city was filled with consternation and horror. The altars and images of the gods were surrounded by votaries, whom even the terrors of a superstitious age could no longer protect. The miserable victims were dragged from the most revered temples, whose walls and pavement were now first stained with civil blood. Many withdrew themselves by a voluntary death from the fury of their enemies. In every house, and in every family, scenes were transacted too horrid for description. Parents, children, brothers, and pretended friends, seized the desired moment for gratifying their latent malignity, and perpetrating crimes without a name. The unfeeling Eurymedon (whose character, as will shortly appear, was a disgrace to human nature) shewed neither ability or inclination to stop the carnage. During the space of six days that his fleet continued in the Corcyrean harbour, the actors in this lamentable tragedy continually aggravated the enormity of their guilt, and improved in the refinement of their cruelty. A dreadful calm succeeded this violent agitation. Five hundred partizans of aristocracy escaped to the coast of Epirus; and the Athenian fleet retired.

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The aristocratical party receive assistance from Epirus.

The fugitives, instead of rejoicing in their safety, thought only of revenge. They sent agents to Lacedæmon and Corinth. By describing their sufferings to the astonished Epirots, they excited their compassion, and acquired their assistance. The severity of the prevailing party in Corcyra increased the number of outlaws; who, at length, finding themselves sufficiently powerful to attack and conquer the island, which, from the moment of their banishment, they had infested by naval descents, sailed with their whole strength for that purpose in boats provided by the Barbarians. In landing at Corcyra, the rowers drove with such violence against the shore, as broke many of their vessels in pieces; the rest they immediately burned, disdaining safety unless purchased by victory. This desperate measure deterred opposition: they advanced, seized, and fortified, Mount Istoné; a strong post in the neighbourhood of the city, from which they ravaged the territory, and subjected their enemies to the multiplied evils of war and famine.

The Athenians again arrive in the island.
Olymp.
lxxxviii.4.
A.C.425.

An epidemical disorder increased the measure of their calamities. The flames of civil discord, which had never been thoroughly extinguished, again broke out within the walls. The misery of the Corcyreans was verging to despair, when an Athenian fleet of forty sail appeared off the coast. This armament was commanded by Eurymedon and Sophocles. It was principally destined against Sicily, as we shall have occasion to relate, but ordered in its voyage thither to touch at Corcyra, and regulate the affairs of that island. This unexpected

pected assistance enabled the besieged to become the besiegers. The outworks and defences of Mount Istoné were successively taken, the parties who defended them gradually retiring to the more elevated branches, and, at length, to the very summit, of the mountain. They were on the point of being driven from thence, and of falling into the hands of enemies exasperated by innumerable injuries suffered and inflicted. Alarmed by this reflection, they called out to the Athenians for quarter, and surrendered to Eurymedon and Sophocles, on condition that their fate should be decided by the people of Athens. They were sent prisoners to the small island of Ptychia, till it should be found convenient to transport them to Athens, and commanded not to make any attempt to stir from thence under pain of annulling the capitulation which had been granted them.

If the malignity of the Corcyrean populace had not exceeded the ordinary standard of human pravity, their resentment must have been softened by the sudden transition wrought by accident in their favour. But their first concern was to intercept the precarious clemency of Athens, and to assure the destruction of their adversaries. This atrocious design was executed by a stratagem equally detestable, uniting, by a singular combination, whatever is savage in ferocity, and base in perfidy. By means of proper agents dispatched secretly to Ptychia, the leaders of the popular faction acquainted those of the prisoners, with whom, in peaceable times, they had respectively lived in some

Perfidious
cruelty of
the Cor-
cyreans;

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habits of intimacy, that the Athenians had determined to give them up indiscriminately to the fury of the populace. Pretending much regret that persons in whom they once had so tender a concern, should share the common calamity, they exhorted them, by all possible means, to contrive their escape, and offered to provide them with a bark for that purpose. The known cruelty of Eurymedon made the artifice succeed. The bark was already launched from the island; the terms of the capitulation were thus infringed; the deluded victims were apprehended in the very act of departure, seized, bound, and delivered into the hands of their inexorable enemies.

and of the
Athenian
command-
ers, Eury-
medon and
Sophocles.

The Athenian commanders, Eurymedon and Sophocles, favoured the deceit, because, as they were themselves obliged to proceed towards Sicily, they envied the honour that would accrue to their successors in conducting the captives to Athens. To gratify this meanness of soul without example, they permitted barbarities beyond belief.

Unexam-
pled bar-
barities
commit-
ted in Cor-
cyra.

The unhappy prisoners were first confined in a dungeon. Dragged successively from thence, in parties of twenty at a time, they were compelled to pass in pairs, their hands tied behind their backs, between two ranks of their enemies, armed with whips, prongs, and every instrument of licentious and disgraceful torture. The wretches left in prison were long ignorant of the ignominious cruelty inflicted on their companions: but, as soon as they learned the abominable scenes transacted without, they refused to quit their confinement,

guarded

guarded the entrance, and invited, with one consent, the Athenians to murder them. But the Athenians wanted either humanity or firmness to commit this kind cruelty. The Corcyrean populace ventured not to force a passage from despair. They mounted the prison walls, uncovered the roof, and overwhelmed those below with stones, darts, and arrows. These weapons were destructive to many, and furnished others with the means of destroying themselves, or each other. They laid down their heads, opened their breasts, exposed their necks, mutually soliciting, in plaintive or frantic accents, the fatal stroke. The whole night (for the night intervened) was spent in this horrid scene; and the morning presented a spectacle too shocking for description. The obdurate hearts of the Corcyreans were incapable of pity or remorse; but their relenting eyes could not bear the sight; and they commanded the bodies of their fellow-citizens, now breathless or expiring, to be thrown on carts, and conveyed without the walls.

Thus ended the sedition of Corcyra¹⁰; but its consequences were not soon to end. The contagion of that unhappy island engendered a political malady, which spread its baneful influence over Greece. The aristocratical, and still more, the popular governments of that country, had ever been liable to faction, which occasionally blazed into sedition. But this morbid tendency, congenial to the constitution of republics, thenceforth assumed a more dangerous appearance, and be-

The consequences of the sedition permanent.

¹⁰ Thucyd. p. 220—285.

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trayed more alarming symptoms. In every republic, and almost in every city, the intriguing and ambitious found the ready protection of Athens, or of Sparta, according as their selfish and guilty designs were screened under the pretence of maintaining the prerogatives of the nobles, or asserting the privileges of the people. A virtuous and moderate aristocracy, an equal impartial freedom, these were the colourings which served to justify violence and varnish guilt. Sheltered by the specious coverings of fair names, the prodigal assassin delivered himself from the importunity of his creditor. The father, with unnatural cruelty, punished the licentious extravagance of his son: the son avenged, by parricide, the stern severity of his father. The debates of the public assembly were decided by the sword. Not satisfied with victory, men thirsted for blood. This general disorder overwhelmed laws human and divine. The ordinary course of events was reversed: sentiments lost their natural force, and words their usual meaning¹¹. Dulness and stupidity triumphed over abilities and refinement; for while the crafty and ingenious were laying fine-spun snares for their enemies, men of blunter minds had immediate recourse to the sword and poignard. This successful audacity was termed manly enterprise; ferocity assumed the name of courage; faction and ambition passed for patriotism and magnanimity; perfidy was called prudence; cunning, wisdom; every vice was clothed in the garb of every virtue:

¹¹ Thucyd. p. 227, & seqq.

while

while justice, moderation, and candour, were branded as weakness, cowardice, meanness of soul, and indifference to the public interest. Such was the perversion of sentiment, and such the corruption of language, first engendered amidst the turbulence of Grecian factions, and too faithfully imitated, as far as the soft effeminacy of modern manners will permit, by the discontented and seditious of later times—Wretched and detestable delusions, by which wicked men deceive and ruin the public and themselves.

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Physical Calamities conspire with the Evils of War.
—Athenian Expedition into Ætolia.—Victories
of Demosthenes.—He fortifies Pybus.—Blocks up
the Spartans in Sphaëteria.—The Spartans solicit
Peace.—Artifices and Imprudence of Cleon.—
His unmerited Success.—Ridiculed by Aristophanes.—Athenian Conquests.—Battle of Delium.
—Commotions in Thrace.—Expedition of Brasidas.—Truce for a Year.—The War renewed.—
Battle of Amphipolis.—Peace of Nicias.—Dissatisfaction of the Spartan Allies.

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XVII.

Physical calamities conspire with the evils of war.
 Olymp.
 lxxxviii.2.
 A. C. 427.

IT would be agreeable to diversify the dark and melancholy scenes of the Peloponnesian war, by introducing occurrences and transactions of a different and more pleasing kind. But such, unfortunately, is the settled gloom of our present subject, that the episodes commonly reflect the same colour with the principal action. The miserable period now under our review, and already distinguished by revolt and sedition, was still farther deformed by a return of the pestilence, and by innumerable earthquakes. The disease carried off five thousand Athenian troops, and a great but uncertain number of other citizens. It raged, during a twelvemonth, with unabating violence; many remedies were employed, but all equally ineffectual. The poison at length spent its force, and

and the malady disappeared by a slow and insensible progress, similar to that observed in the Levant, and other parts of the world, which are still liable to be visited by this dreadful calamity¹. The earthquakes alarmed Attica and Bœotia, but proved most destructive in the neighbouring isles. The dreadful concussions of the land were accompanied, or perhaps produced, by a violent agitation of the sea. The reflux of the waves overwhelmed the flourishing city of Orobia, on the western coast of Eubœa. Similar disasters happened in the small islands of Atalanta and Peperathus. Nor did these alarming events terminate the afflictions of the Greeks; for Nature, as if she had delighted to produce at one period every thing most awful, poured forth a torrent of fire from Mount Ætna, which demolished the industrious labours of the Cataneans. A dreadful eruption had happened fifty years before this period; and the present was the third, and most memorable, by which Sicily had been agitated and inflamed, since the coasts of that island were adorned by Grecian colonies².

If the Peloponnesian war had not been carried on with an animosity unknown to the mildness of modern times, the long sufferings of the contending parties would have disposed them eagerly to desire the blessings of tranquillity. But such virulent passions rankled in Athens and Sparta, that while calamities were equally balanced, and the

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Olymp.
lxxxviii. 3.
A. C. 426.

Expedition of
Demosthenes to
Ætolia.
Olymp.
lxxxviii. 4.
A. C. 425.

¹ Voyage de Tournefort, vol. ii. Discourse on the Plague, in the Phil. Transf. vol. lxiv.

² Thucyd. p. 250.

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capitals of both republics were secure, no combination of adverse circumstances seemed sufficient to determine either side to purchase peace by the smallest diminution of honour. Yet to this necessity, Sparta in the following year was reduced by a train of events, equally sudden and singular. Demosthenes, a general of merit and enterprize, commanded the Athenian forces at Naupactus. This town, as related above, had been bestowed on the unfortunate Messenians; by whose assistance, together with that of the Athenian allies in Acarnania, Cephallenia, and Zacynthus, Demosthenes undertook to reduce the hostile provinces of Ætolia, Ambracia, and Leucadia. But the operations necessary for this purpose were obstructed by the jealousies and dissensions which prevailed among the confederates; each state insisting, that the whole force of the war should be immediately directed against its particular enemies.

Misunder-
standing
among the
Athenian
allies.

The allied army, thus distracted by contrariety, and weakened by defection, performed nothing decisive against Leucadia or Ambracia. In Ætolia they were extremely unfortunate. The Messenians, who were continually harassed by the natives of that barbarous province, persuaded Demosthenes that it would be easy to over-run their country, before the inhabitants, who lived in scattered villages, widely separated from each other, could collect their force, or attempt resistance. In pursuance of this advice, Demosthenes entered Ætolia, took and plundered the towns, and drove the inhabitants before him. During several days he
marched

marched unresisted; but having proceeded to Ægiti-
um, the principal, or rather only city in the
province, he found that his design had by no means
escaped the notice of the enemy. Ægiti-
um is situate among lofty mountains, and about ten
miles distant from the Corinthian gulf. Among
these intricate, and almost inaccessible heights the
flower of the Ætolian nation were posted. Even
the most distant tribes had come up, before the
confederate army entered their borders.

Ægiti-
um was stormed; but the inhabitants
escaped to their countrymen concealed among the
mountains. While the Athenians and their allies
pursued them, the Ætolians rushed, in separate
bodies, from different eminences, and checked the
pursuers with their darts and javelins. Having
discharged their missile weapons, they retired, be-
ing light-armed, and incapable to resist the im-
pression of pikemen. New detachments continu-
ally poured forth from the mountains, and in all
directions annoyed the confederates. The latter
lost no ground, as long as their archers had darts,
and were able to use them. But when the greatest
part of their light troops were wounded or slain,
the heavy-armed men began to give away. They
still, however, maintained their order; and the
battle long continued, in alternate pursuits and re-
treats, the Ætolians always flying before the ene-
my as soon as they had discharged their javelins.
But at length the confederates were exhausted by
so many repeated charges, and totally defeated by
opponents who durst not wait their approach.

Singular
mode of
battle.

Their

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Unfortu-
nate issue
of the ex-
pedition.

Their conductors through this intricate country had all perished. They mistook their road to the sea. The enemy were light-armed, and in their own territories. The pursuit, therefore, was unusually destructive. Many fell into caverns, or tumbled headlong from precipices. A large party wandered into an impervious wood, which being set on fire by the enemy, consumed them in its flames. A miserable remnant returned to Naupactus; afflicted by the loss of their companions, and highly mortified at being defeated by Barbarians, alike ignorant of the rules of war, and of the laws of civil society, who spoke an unknown dialect, and fed on raw flesh³.

Demosthe-
nes de-
fends
Naupac-
tus, &c.

This disaster deterred Demosthenes from returning to Athens, till fortune gave him an opportunity to retrieve the honour of his arms. The Ætolians and Ambraciots, the most formidable enemies of the republic on that western coast of Greece, solicited and obtained assistance from Lacedæmon and Corinth, vigorously attacked the towns of Naupactus and Amphilocheian Argos, and threatened to reduce the whole province of Acarnania, in which the latter was situated. The vigilance and activity of Demosthenes not only saved these important cities, but obtained the most signal advantages over the assailants. With profound military skill he divided the strength of the enemy, and, by a well-conducted stratagem, totally defeated the Ambraciots among the heights of Idomené. A strong detachment of that brave nation had ad-

Defeats the
Ætolians
and Am-
braciots.

³ Thucyd. p. 237, & seqq.

vanced the preceding day to Olpæ, a place fortified by the Acarnanians, and the seat of their courts of justice. Demosthenes obliged them to retreat with considerable loss, and intercepted their return homeward. Meanwhile the collected force of the Ambraciots marched to support their detachment, with whose misfortunes they were totally unacquainted. Apprised of this design, Demosthenes beset the passes, and seized the most advantageous posts on their route. With the remainder of his force he advanced to attack them in front. They had already proceeded to Idomené, and encamped on the lowest ridge of that mountain ⁴.

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Demosthenes placed his Messenians in the van, and commanded them, as they marched along, to discourse in their Doric dialect. This circumstance, as the morning was yet in its dawn, effectually prevented the advanced guards from suspecting them to be enemies. Demosthenes then rushed forward with the Messenians and Acarnanians. The Ambraciots were yet in their beds. The camp was no sooner assaulted, than the rout began. Many were slain on the spot; the rest fled amain; but the passes were beset, and the pursuers light-armed. Some ran to the sea, and beheld a new object of terror, in some Athenian ships then cruising on the coast. In this complication of calamities, they plunged into the water, and swam to the hostile squadron, choosing rather to be destroyed by the Athenians, than by the enemies from whom they had escaped.

Surprises
their
camp.

⁴ Thucyd. p. 244, & seqq.

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Consternation of an
Ambracian herald.

On the following day, the victors, who remained at Idomené, stripping the dead, and erecting a trophy, were addressed by a herald sent on the part of the detachment who had so much suffered in its retreat from Olpæ. This herald knew nothing of the fresh disaster that had befallen his countrymen. Observing the arms of the Ambraciots, he was astonished at their number. The victors perceiving his surprise, asked him, before he explained his commission, "What he judged to be the amount of the slain?" "Not more than two hundred," replied the herald. The demander then said, "It should seem otherwise, for there are the arms of more than a thousand men." The herald rejoined, "They cannot then belong to our party." The other replied, "They must, if you fought yesterday at Idomené." "We fought no where yesterday; we suffered the day before, in our retreat from Olpæ." "But *we* fought yesterday against these Ambraciots, who were marching to your relief." When the herald heard this, he burst into a groan, and went abruptly off, without further explaining his commission⁵.

Demosthenes
fails to the
Peloponnesus.
Olymp.
lxxxviii.4.
A.C. 425.

These important successes enabled Demosthenes to return with honour to Athens. The term of his military command had expired; but his mind could not brook inactivity. He therefore solicited permission to accompany, as a volunteer, the armament which sailed to Corcyra, the success of which has already been related, with leave to em-

⁵ Thucyd. p. 244, & seqq.

ploy the Messenians, whom he carried along with him, on the coast of Peloponnesus, should any opportunity occur there, for promoting the public service. While the fleet slowly coasted along the southern shores of that peninsula, the Messenians viewed, with mingled joy and sorrow, the long lost, but still beloved, seats of their ancestors. They regretted, in particular, the decay of ancient Pylus, the royal residence of their admired Nestor, whose youth had been adorned by valour, and his age renowned for wisdom. Their immortal resentment against Sparta was inflamed by beholding the ruins of Messen^é. A thousand ideas and sentiments, which time had obliterated, revived at the sight of their native shores.

Emotions
of the Mes-
senians at
the sight
of their
native
shores.

When the tumult of their emotions subsided, they explained their feelings to Demosthenes, and to each other. He suggested, or at least warmly approved, the design of landing, and rebuilding Pylus, which had been abandoned by the Spartans, though it enjoyed a convenient harbour, and was strongly fortified by nature. Demosthenes proposed this measure to Eurymedon and Sophocles, who answered him with the insolence congenial to their character, "That there were many barren capes on the coast of Peloponnesus, which those might fortify who wished to entail an useless expence on their country." He next applied to the several captains of the fleet, and even to the inferior officers, but without better success, although he assured them that the place abounded in wood and stone, with which a wall, sufficient for defence,

The Athe-
nians and
Messenians
fortify
Pylus.

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XVII.

might speedily be completed. He had desisted from farther intreaties, when a fortunate storm drove the whole fleet towards the Pylian harbour. This circumstance enabled him to renew his instances with greater force, alleging that the events of fortune confirmed the expediency of the undertaking. At length the sailors and soldiers, weary of idleness (for the weather prevented them from putting to sea), began the work of their own accord, and carried it on with such vigour and activity, that in six days the place was strongly fortified on every side⁶. The Athenian fleet then proceeded to Corcyra, Demosthenes retaining only five ships to guard this new acquisition.

The Spartans attempt to dislodge them.

The Spartans were no sooner apprised of this daring measure, than they withdrew their army from its annual incursion into Attica, and recalled their fleet from Corcyra. The citizens, residing at home, immediately flew to arms, and marched towards Pylus, which was only fifty miles distant from their capital. They found the new fortress so well prepared for defence, that nothing could be undertaken against it with any prospect of success, until their whole forces had assembled. This occasioned but a short delay; after which Pylus was vigorously assaulted by sea and land. The walls were weakest towards the harbour; the entrance of which, however, was so narrow, that only two ships could sail into it abreast. Here the attack was most furious, and the resistance most obstinate.

⁶ Thucydid. p. 256, & seqq.

Demosthenes encouraged his troops by his voice and arm. The gallant Brasidas, a man destined to act such an illustrious part in the following scenes of the war, called out to the Lacedæmonian pilots to drive against the beach; and exhorted them, by the destruction of their ships, to save the honour of their country. He farther recommended this boldness by his example, but, in performing it, received a wound which rendered him insensible. His body dropped into the sea, seemingly deprived of life, but was recovered by the affectionate zeal of his attendants. When his senses returned, he perceived the loss of his shield, a matter highly punishable by the Spartan laws, if the shield of Brasidas had not been lost with more glory than ever shield was defended⁷.

During three days, Demosthenes, with very unequal strength, resisted the enemy; when the approach of the Athenian fleet from Corcyra, which he had apprised of his danger, terminated the incredible labours of his exhausted garrison. A naval engagement ensued, in which the Lacedæmonians were defeated. But neither this defeat, nor the loss of five ships, nor the total dispersion of their fleet, nor the unexpected relief of Pylus, gave them so much uneasiness, as an event principally occasioned by their own imprudence. The island of Sphacteria, scarce two miles in circumference, barren, woody, and uninhabited, lies before the harbour of Pylus. In this island the Spartans had

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Gallantry
of Brasi-
das.

About
four hun-
dred Spar-
tans
blocked
up in
Sphacte-
ria.

⁷ Thucyd. p. 258.

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posted four hundred and twenty heavy-armed men, with a much greater proportion of Helots, not reflecting that the Athenians, as soon as they had resumed the command of the neighbouring sea, must have these forces at their devotion. This circumstance occurred not to the Spartans till after their defeat; and then affected them the more deeply, because the troops blocked up in the island belonged to the first families of the republic.

Consternation in
Sparta.

Advice of this misfortune was immediately sent to the capital. The annual magistrates, attended by a deputation of the senate, hastened to examine matters on the spot. The evil appeared to be incapable of remedy; and of such importance was this body of Spartans to the community, that all present agreed in the necessity of soliciting a truce, until ambassadors were sent to Athens to treat of a general peace. The Athenians granted a suspension of hostilities, on condition that the Spartans, as a pledge of their sincerity, surrendered their whole fleet (consisting of about sixty vessels) into the harbour of Pylus. Even this mortifying proposal was accepted. Twenty days were consumed in the embassy; during which time the troops intercepted in Sphacteria were supplied with a stated proportion of meal, meat, and wine⁸, that of the free-

⁸ Thucydides does not ascertain the quantity of meat. He says, two chænixes of meal, and two cotyls of wine; that is, two pints of meal, and one pint of wine English measure, a very small allowance; but the Athenians were afraid lest the besieged might hoard their provisions, if allowed more for daily support; which, if the negotiation failed, would enable them to hold out the place longer than they could otherwise have done.

men amounting to double the quantity allowed to the slaves.

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XVII.

The Spartans solicit peace.

When the Spartan ambassadors were admitted to an audience at Athens, they artfully apologized for the intended length of their discourses. In all their transactions with the Greeks, they had hitherto affected the dignified brevity⁹ inspired by conscious pre-eminence: “ Yet on the present occasion, they allowed that it was necessary to explain, at some length, the advantages which would result to all Greece, and particularly to Athens herself, if the latter accepted the treaty and alliance, the free gifts of unfeigned friendship, spontaneously offered by Sparta. They pretended not to conceal or extenuate the greatness of their misfortune; but the Athenians ought also to remember the vicissitudes of war. It was full time to embrace a hearty reconciliation, and to terminate the calamities of their common country. The war had as yet been carried on with more emulation than hatred; neither party had been reduced to extremity, nor had any incurable evil been yet inflicted or suffered. Terms of agreement, if accepted in the moment of victory, would redound to the glory of Athens; if rejected, would ascertain, who were the authors of the war, and to whom the public calamities ought thenceforth to be imputed; since it was well known, that if Athens and Sparta were unanimous, no power in Greece would venture to dispute their commands¹⁰. ”

⁹ Imperatoria brevitās. TACITUS.

¹⁰ Thucyd. p. 262, & seqq.

C H A P.
XVII.

Arrogant
demands
of the A-
thenians.

The meek spirit of this discourse only discovered to the Athenians the full extent of their good fortune, of which they determined completely to avail themselves. Instigated by the violence of Cleon, they answered the ambassadors with great haughtiness; demanding, as preliminaries to the treaty, that the Spartans in Sphacteria should be sent to Athens; and that several places of great importance, belonging to the Spartans or their allies, should be delivered into their hands. These lofty pretensions, which were by no means justified by military success, appeared totally inadmissible to the ambassadors, who returned in disgust to the Spartan camp.

The nego-
ciation
fruitless.

Nothing, it was evident, could be expected from the moderation of Athens; but it was expected from her justice, that she would restore the fleet, which had been surrendered as a pledge of the treaty. Even this was, on various pretences, denied¹¹. Both parties, therefore, prepared for hostilities; the Athenians to maintain their arrogance, the Spartans to avenge it.

Obstinate
defence of
Sphacte-
ria.

The former employed the operation of famine, as the readiest and least dangerous mode of reducing the soldiers in Sphacteria. The Athenian fleet, now greatly augmented, carefully guarded the island night and day. But notwithstanding their utmost vigilance, small vessels availed them-

¹¹ The Athenians objected, "an incursion towards their fortress, during the suspension of hostilities, *καὶ ἄλλα ἐκ ἀξιολογα*," and other matters of little moment, says Thucydides, with his usual impartiality, p. 266.

selves of storms and darkness to throw provisions into the place ; a service undertaken by slaves from the promise of liberty ; and by freemen, from the prospect of great pecuniary rewards. The Athenians redoubled their diligence, and often intercepted these victuallers ; but they found it more difficult to interrupt the expert divers, who, plunging deep under water, dragged after them bottles of leather, filled with honey and flour. The blockade was thus fruitlessly protracted several weeks. Demosthenes was averse to attack an island difficult of access, covered with wood, destitute of roads, and defended on the side of Pylus by a natural fortification, strengthened by art. Meanwhile the Athenians began to suffer inconveniences in their turn. Their garrison in Pylus was closely pressed by the enemy ; there was but one source of fresh water, and that scanty, in the place ; provisions grew scarce : the barrenness of the neighbouring coast afforded no supply : while they besieged the Spartans, they themselves experienced the hardships of a siege.

When their situation was reported at Athens, the assembly fell into commotion : many clamoured against Demosthenes ; several accused Cleon. The artful demagogue, whose opposition had chiefly prevented an advantageous peace with Sparta, affected to disbelieve the intelligence, and advised sending men of approved confidence to Pylus, in order to detect the imposture. The populace called aloud, “ that Cleon himself should undertake that commission.” But the dissembler dreaded

Artifices
and impu-
dence of
Cleon.

to

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XVII.

to become the dupe of his own artifice. He perceived, that if he went to Pylus, he must, at his return, either acknowledge the truth of the report, and thus be subjected to immediate shame, or fabricate false intelligence, and thus be exposed to future punishment. He therefore eluded his own proposal, by declaring, "that it ill became the dignity of Athens to stoop to a formal and tedious examination; and that, whatever were the state of the armament, if the commanders acted like men, they might take Sphacteria in a few days: that if *he* had the honour to be general, he would sail to the island with a small body of light infantry, and take it at the first onset."

Character
of Nicias.

These sarcastic observations were chiefly directed against Nicias, one of the generals actually present in the assembly; a man of a virtuous, but timid disposition; endowed with much prudence, and little enterprise; possessed of moderate abilities, and immoderate riches; a zealous partizan of aristocracy, and an avowed enemy to Cleon, whom he regarded as the worst enemy of his country.

He cedes
the com-
mand to
Cleon.

A person of this character could not be much inclined to engage in the hazardous expedition to Sphacteria. When the Athenians, with the usual licentiousness that prevailed in their assemblies, called out to Cleon, "that if the enterprise appeared so easy, it would better suit the extent of his abilities;" Nicias rose up, and immediately offered to cede to him the command. Cleon at first accepted it, thinking Nicias's proposal merely a feint; but when the latter appeared in earnest, his
adversary

adversary drew back, alleging, "that Nicias, not Cleon, was general." The Athenians, with the malicious pleasantry natural to the multitude, pressed Cleon the closer, the more eagerly he receded. He was at length overcome by their importunity, but not forsaken by his impudence¹². Advancing to the middle of the assembly, he declared, "that he was not afraid of the Lacedæmonians; and engaged, in twenty days, to bring the Spartans as prisoners to Athens, or to die in the attempt¹³." This heroical language excited laughter among the multitude; the wise rejoiced in thinking, that they must obtain one of two advantages, either the destruction of a turbulent demagogue (which they rather hoped), or the capture of the Spartans in Sphacteria.

Boastful
promise of
the latter;

The latter event was hastened by an accident; while some soldiers were preparing their victuals, the wood was set on fire, and long burned unperceived, till a brisk gale arising, the conflagration raged with such violence, as threatened to consume the island. This unforeseen disaster disclosed the strength and position of the Spartans; and Demosthenes was actually preparing to attack them, when Cleon, with his light-armed troops, arrived in the camp. The island was invaded during night; the advanced guards were taken or slain. At the dawn, the Athenians made a descent from

which is
performed
by acci-
dent.
Olymp.
lxxxviii.4.
A. C. 425.

¹² Thucyd. p. 271.

¹³ Η αὐτὴ ἀποκτενέει, or, "kill them on the spot." A little alteration in the text will give the meaning which I preferred as most agreeable to what follows; but the other translation better suits the boastful character of Cleon.

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seventy ships. The main body of the enemy retired to the strong post opposite to Pylus, harassed in their march by showers of arrows, stones, and darts, involved in the ashes of the burnt wood, which, mounting widely into the air, on all sides intercepted their sight, and increased the gloom of battle. The Spartans, closely embodied, and presenting a dreadful front to the assailants, made good their retreat. Having occupied the destined post, they boldly defended it wherever the enemy approached, for the nature of the ground hindered it from being surrounded. The Athenians used their utmost efforts to repel and overcome them; and during the greatest part of the day, both parties obstinately persevered in their purpose, under the painful pressures of battle, thirst, and a burning sun. At length the Messenians, whose ardour had been signally distinguished in every part of this enterprise, discovered an unknown path leading to the eminence which defended the Lacedæmonian rear. The Spartans were thus encompassed on all sides, and reduced to a similar situation to that of their illustrious countrymen who fell at Thermopylæ.

The Spartans in Sphæstria carried prisoners to Athens.

Nor did their commanders disgrace the country of Leonidas. Their general, Epitades, was slain. Hippagretes was dying of his wounds. Styphon, the third in command, still exhorted them to persevere. But Demosthenes and Cleon, desirous rather to carry them prisoners to Athens, than to put them to death, invited them, by the loud proclamation of a herald, to lay down their arms.

The

The greater part dropped their shields, and waved their hands, in token of compliance. A conference followed between Demosthenes and Cleon on one side, and Styphon on the other. Styphon desired leave to send over to the Lacedæmonians on the continent for advice. Several messages passed between them; in the last of which it was said, "the Lacedæmonians permit you to consult your own utility, provided you submit to nothing base:" in consequence of which determination, they surrendered their arms and their persons. They were conducted to Athens, within the time assigned by Cleon; having held out fifty-two days after the expiration of the truce, during which time they had been so sparing of the provisions conveyed to them by the extraordinary means above mentioned, that, when the place was taken, they had still something in reserve¹⁴.

The Athenians withdrew their fleet, leaving a strong garrison in Pylus, which was soon reinforced by an enterprising body of Messenians from Naupactus. The Messenians, though possessed of no more than one barren cape on their native and once happy coast, resumed their inveterate hatred against Sparta, whose territories they continually infested by incursions, or harassed by alarms. This species of war, destructive in itself, was rendered still more dangerous by the revolts of the Helots, attracted by every motive of affection towards their ancient kinsmen, and animated by every principle of resentment against their tyrannical masters. Mean-

Humilia-
tion of
Sparta.

¹⁴ Thucyd. p. 271—279.

while

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Authority
and info-
lence of
Cleon.

while the Athenian fleet renewed and multiplied their ravages on the coast of Peloponnesus. Reduced to extremity by such proceedings, the Spartans sent to Athens repeated overtures of accommodation. But the good fortune of the Athenians had only nourished their ambition. At the instigation of Cleon, they dismissed the Spartan ambassadors more insolently than ever¹⁵. Such was their deference to the opinion of this arrogant demagogue; at the same time that, with the most inconsistent levity, they listened with pleasure to the plays of Aristophanes, which lashed the character and administration of Cleon with the boldest severity of satire, sharpened by the edge of the most poignant ridicule.

Exposed
by Ari-
stophanes.

The taking of Pylus, the triumphant return of Cleon, a notorious coward transformed by caprice and accident into a brave and successful commander, were topics well suiting the comic vein of Aristophanes. The imperious demagogue had deserved the personal resentment of the poet, by denying the legitimacy of his birth¹⁶, and thereby contesting his title to vote in the assembly. On former occasions, Aristophanes had stigmatised the incapacity and insolence of Cleon, together with his perfidious selfishness in embroiling the affairs of the republic. In the comedy¹⁷ first represented in the seventh year of the war, he attacks him in the moment of victory, when fortune had rendered him

¹⁵ Aristoph. Equit. v. 794.

¹⁶ Vit. anonym. Aristoph.

¹⁷ The *ἐπιτιμήσις*.

the idol of a licentious multitude, when no comedian was so daring as to play his character, and no painter so bold as to design his mask¹⁸.

Aristophanes, therefore, appeared for the first time on the stage, only disguising his own face, the better to represent the part of Cleon. In this ludicrous piece, which seems to have been celebrated even beyond its merit, the people of Athens are described under the allegory of a capricious old dotard, whose credulity, abused by a malicious slave lately admitted into his house¹⁹, persecutes and torments his faithful old servants. Demosthenes bitterly complains, that, intending to gratify the palate of the old man, he had brought a delicate morsel from Pylus; but that it had been stolen by Cleon, and by him served up to their common master. After lamenting, with his companion Nicias, the hardships of their condition, they hold counsel together, and contrive various expedients for putting an end to their common calamities. The desponding Nicias proposes drinking bull's blood, after the example of Themistocles; Demosthenes, with more courage, advises a hearty draught of wine. Finding Cleon asleep, they seize the opportunity not only to purloin this liquor, but to rifle his pockets, in which they discover some ancient oracles, typically representing the succession of Athenian magistrates. Towards the end of the prophecy, it was said, that the

Account
of his co-
medy, in-
titled, the
Knights.

¹⁸ Ὑπο τε δευς γαρ αυτον εδεις ηθελε

των σκευοποτων ειπασαι. Equites, v. 231.

¹⁹ Νεονητον κακον, "the new-bought mischief."

dragon

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dragon should overcome the devouring vulture. The rapacious avarice of Cleon corresponded to the type of the vulture; and the dragon darkly shadowed out Agoracritus, an eminent maker of puddings and sausages, the shape and contents of which alluded to the figure and food of that terrible serpent. Nicias and Demosthenes hail this favourite of fortune, as the destined master of the republic. Agoracritus alleges in vain, that he is totally unacquainted with political affairs, ignorant of every liberal art, and has hardly learned to read. They reply, by announcing to him the oracle, and by proving that his pretended imperfections better qualified him to conduct the government of Athens. This office required none of the talents, the want of which he lamented. He matched Cleon in impudence, and surpassed him in strength of lungs. His profession had taught him to squeeze, to amass, to bruise, to embroil, and to confound; and long experience had rendered him accomplished in all the frauds and chicanery of the market²⁰. He might therefore boldly enter the lists with Cleon, being assured of assistance from the whole body of Athenian knights²¹. Agoracritus, thus encouraged, prepares for encountering his adversary. The contest, long doubtful, is maintained in a style of the lowest buffoonery, always ludicrous, often indecent. The old dotard, or rather the Athenians whom he represents,

²⁰ The same word in Greek denotes the market and the forum. Indeed the same place usually served for both.

²¹ The ἵππεις, or Equites, the second rank of citizens at Athens, who detested Cleon, and from whom the play takes its name.

finally

finally acknowledge their past errors; and regret being so long deceived by an upstart slave, through whose obstinacy in continuing the war, they had been cooped up within the walls of an unwholesome city, and hindered from enjoying their beautiful fields and happy rural amusements. Agoracritus seizes this favourable moment to produce two ancient treaties with the Lacedæmonians, personified by two beautiful women, whom he had found closely mewed up in the house of Cleon. Of these females the old Athenian becomes suddenly enamoured, and they retire together to the country.

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The people of Athens permitted, and even approved, the licentious boldness of Aristophanes; but neither the strength of reason, nor the sharpness of satire, could resist the impetuosity of their ambition. The war was rendered popular by success; they prepared for carrying it on with redoubled vigour. The first operations of the ensuing summer gratified their utmost hopes. The principal division of the fleet, conducted by the prudence of Nicias, took the fertile and populous island of Cythera, stretching from the southern promontory of Laconia towards the Cretan sea, and long enriched by the commerce of Egypt and Libya. The Lacedæmonian garrison, as well as the Spartan magistrates in the island, surrendered prisoners of war. The more dangerous part of the inhabitants were removed to the Athenian isles; the remainder were subjected to an annual tribute of eight hundred pounds sterling; an Athenian garrison took possession of the fortress.

The Athenians take
Cythera.
Olymp.
lxxxix. 1.
A. C. 424.

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Reduce
Nicæa, and
ravage Pe-
loponne-
sus.

Soon after this important conquest, the arms of Demosthenes and Hippocrates reduced the town of Nicæa, the principal sea-port of the Megareans; and the Athenian fleet ravaged with impunity several maritime cities on the eastern coast of Peloponnesus. Thyrea was condemned to a harder fate. This city, together with the surrounding district, had been granted, by the compassion of Sparta, to the miserable natives of Ægina, who (as above mentioned) had been driven from their once powerful island by the cruelty of Athens. This cruelty still continued to pursue them. Their newly-raised walls were taken by assault; their houses burned; and the inhabitants, without distinction, put to the sword.

Endeavour
to produce
a revolu-
tion in
Bœotia.

Hitherto all the enterprises of the Athenians were crowned with success. Fortune first deserted them in Bœotia. During several months their generals, Demosthenes and Hippocrates, availing themselves of the political factions of that country, had been carrying on secret intrigues with Chæroneæ, Siphæ, and Orchomenus, places abounding in declared partizans of democracy, and eternally hostile to the ambition of Thebes. The insurgents had agreed to take arms, in order to betray the western parts of Bœotia to Demosthenes, who sailed with forty galleys from Naupactus; while Hippocrates, at the head of seven thousand heavy-armed Athenians, and a much greater proportion of light-armed auxiliaries, invaded the eastern frontier of that province. It was expected, that, before the Thebans could bring a sufficient force into the

the field, the invaders and insurgents, advancing from opposite extremities of the country, might unite in the centre, and perhaps subdue Thebes itself, the most powerful, as well as most zealous, ally of Sparta.

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This plan, though concerted with much ability, was found too complicated for execution. Demosthenes steered towards Siphæ, before his coadjutor was ready to take the field; some mistake, it is said, having happened about the time appointed for action; and the whole contrivance was betrayed by Nichomachus, a Phocian, to the Spartans, and by them communicated to the Bœotians. The cities which meditated revolt were thus secured, before Demosthenes appeared at Siphæ, and before Hippocrates had even marched from Attica.

Their plan
too com-
plicated for
execution.

The latter at length entered the eastern frontier of Bœotia; and, as the principal design had miscarried, contented himself with taking and fortifying Delium, a place sacred to Apollo. Having garrisoned this post, he prepared for returning home. But while his army still lay in the neighbourhood of Delium, the Thebans, encouraged by Pagondas, a brave and skilful leader, marched with great rapidity from Tanagra, in order to intercept his retreat. Their forces amounted to eighteen thousand; the Athenians were little less numerous. An engagement ensued, which national emulation rendered bloody and obstinate. Before the battle, Pagondas had detached a small squadron of horse, with orders to ride up after the commencement of the action. This stratagem

They are
defeated in
the battle
of Delium.
Olymp.
lxxxix. r.
A. C. 424.

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was decisive. The Athenians, terrified at the sight of a reinforcement, which their fears magnified into a new army, were thrown into disorder, and put to flight. Approaching darkness saved them from total destruction. They escaped disgracefully into Attica, after leaving in the field of battle a thousand pikemen, with their commander Hippocrates.

The Thebans take Delium by means of a machine invented for that purpose.

The victorious army immediately formed the siege of Delium, which was taken by means of a machine first contrived for that purpose. Several parts of the fortification, which had been raised in great haste, consisted chiefly of wood. The besiegers therefore, joining together a number of large beams, formed a huge mast, perforated in the middle; to one of its extremities they appended a prodigious mass of pitch and sulphur; and to the other a bellows, which, when this unusual instrument of destruction was raised above the wooden rampart, immediately threw the whole into flames. The Athenian garrison, diminished by death or desertion to two hundred men, surrendered prisoners of war²².

Commo-
tions in
Thrace.

The Athenians had scarcely time to lament their losses in Bœotia, when they received intelligence of a calamity in another quarter, equally unexpected, and still more alarming. This event is the more remarkable, because it naturally arose out of the preceding prosperity of Athens, and the past misfortunes of Sparta. The uninterrupted

²² Thucyd. p. 304—320.

train of success which attended the arms of Nicias and Demosthenes in the eighth year of the war, alarmed the citizens of Olynthus and other places of the Chalcidicé, which having embraced the earliest opportunity of revolting from the Athenians, justly dreaded the vengeance of an incensed and victorious people. Every southerly wind threatened them with the approach of an Athenian fleet. Their apprehensions were not less painful on the side of Thessaly. The slightest movement in that country terrified them with the apprehensions of an Athenian army, which, victorious in the south, should advance to punish its northern enemies. But as none of these dreaded dangers were realised, the inhabitants of the Chalcidicé gradually resumed courage, put their towns in a posture of defence, and craved assistance from their Peloponnesian allies. At the same time Perdiccas, king of Macedon, who regarded the Athenians as his ancient and natural enemies, and the rapacious invaders of his coast, sent money into the south of Greece, for the purpose of hiring soldiers, whom he intended to employ in resisting the encroachments of that ambitious people, as well as in subduing the Elymeans, Lyncestæ, and other barbarous tribes, not yet incorporated in the Macedonian kingdom.

Such were the enemies, whose activity the good fortune of Athens had roused; while the calamities of Sparta prompted her to supply the reinforcement of troops, which both Perdiccas and the Chalcidians demanded. During the seventh and

Fomented
by the
Spartans.

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eight years of the war, that republic fatally experienced the truth of Pericles's maxim, "that those who command the sea, may also become masters at land." The Athenian fleets domineered over the coast of Peloponnesus. It was impossible to foresee what places would be the next objects of their continual descents. The maritime parts were successively laid waste, and finally abandoned by the inhabitants, who found resistance ineffectual and useless. These misfortunes were increased by the frequent desertion of the Helots to the neighbouring garrisons in Pylus and Cythera, and by the dread of a general insurrection among those numerous and unhappy victims of Spartan tyranny. To prevent this evil, the Spartans had recourse to such expedients as excite astonishment and horror. They commanded the Helots to choose two thousand of their bravest and most meritorious youths, who, by the general consent of their companions, deserved the crown of liberty; and when invested with this perfidious ornament, the unsuspecting freemen had paraded the streets, and sacrificed in the temples, exulting in their late emancipation, these new members of the community gradually disappeared from the sight of men, nor was it ever known by what means they had been destroyed. But the veil of mystery, which concealed that dark and bloody stratagem, prevented neither the resentment of the slaves, nor the just suspicion of their masters. The latter were eager to embrace any measure that might deliver their country from its dangerous domestic foes. With much satisfaction,

tion, therefore, they sent seven hundred Helots to the standard of Brasidas, whose merit had recommended him to Perdiccas and the Chalcidians, as the general best qualified to manage the Macedonian war. About a thousand soldiers were levied in the neighbouring cities of Peloponnesus. Several Spartans cheerfully accompanied a leader whom they admired. With this inconsiderable force Brasidas, towards the beginning of autumn, undertook an expedition highly important in its consequences, and conducted with consummate prudence and bravery²³.

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Having traversed the friendly countries of Bœotia and Phocis, he arrived at the foot of Mount Oëta, and penetrated through the narrow defiles confined between that steep and woody range of hills, and the boisterous waves of the Malian gulf. The sight of Thermopylæ animated the enthusiasm of the Spartans, and encouraged them to force their way through the hostile plains of Thessaly; a country actually torn by domestic discord, but always friendly to the Athenians. The celerity of Brasidas anticipated the slow opposition of a divided enemy. Having reached the Macedonian town of Dium, he joined forces with Perdiccas, who proposed directing the first operations of the combined army against Arribæus, the king or leader of the barbarous Lyncestæ. But even this Barbarian knew the valour of the Spartans, and the equity of Brasidas. To the decision of the

Brasidas's
expedition
to Thrace.
Olymp.
lxxxix. 1.
A. C. 424.

²³ Thucyd. p. 304.

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Grecian general he offered to submit the differences between Perdiccas and himself, and engaged to abide by the award, however unfavourable to his interest. The Spartan listened to a proposal extremely reasonable in itself, though altogether inconsistent with the ambitious views of Perdiccas, who disdained to accept as a judge the man whom he paid as an auxiliary. Brasidas, on the other hand, declined in firm but decent terms, to employ his valour against those who implored his justice. The generals thus separated in mutual disgust; and Perdiccas thenceforth reduced his contribution of subsidy from a moiety to a third; but even that was extorted from his fears, not bestowed by his munificence.

His transactions
with the
Acanthians.

Brasidas hastened to join the Chalcidians, by whom he was received with a degree of joy suitable to the impatience with which he had been expected. Amidst the general defection of their neighbours, the towns of Acanthus and Stagirus still maintained their allegiance to Athens. Brasidas appeared before the gates of Acanthus, while the peaceful inhabitants were preparing for the labours of the vintage. He sent a messenger, craving leave to enter the place, and to address the assembly. The Acanthians were divided in opinion; but the majority, fearing to expose their ripe fields and vineyards to the resentment of his army, agreed to admit the general alone and unattended, and impartially to weigh whatever he proposed for their deliberation. Brasidas, though a Spartan, was an able speaker. He observed to the Acanthians,

con-

convened in full assembly, “ That, in compliance with the generous resolution of Sparta, he had undertaken, and finally accomplished, a long and dangerous journey, to deliver them from the tyranny of Athenian magistrates and garrisons, and to restore them, what the common oppressors of Greece had so long withheld, the independent government of their own equitable laws. This was the object, which, amidst all the calamities of war, the Spartans had ever kept in view; this was the purpose, which, before his departure from home, the principal magistrates had sworn unanimously to maintain. *That* freedom and independence, which formed the domestic happiness of Sparta, his countrymen were ambitious to communicate to all their allies. But if the Acanthians refused to share the general benefit, they must not complain of experiencing the unhappy effects of their obstinacy. The arms of Sparta would compel those whom her arguments had failed to persuade. Nor could this be blamed as injustice; first, because the resources with which the Acanthians furnished Athens, under the ignominious name of tribute, served to rivet the chains of Greece; and secondly, because the example of a people, so wealthy and flourishing, and long renowned for their penetration and sagacity, might influence the resolutions of neighbouring states, and deter them from concurring with the measures necessary to promote the public welfare and security.”

This judicious discourse, enforced by the terror of the Spartan army, engaged the Acanthians to accept

His merit
and suc-
cess.

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accept the friendship of Brasidas. Stagirus, another city on the Strymonic gulf, readily followed the example, and opened its gates to the deliverer. During the ensuing winter, the measures of the Spartan general were conducted with equal ability and enterprise. His successful operations against the inland towns facilitated the surrender of such places, as, by their maritime or insular situation, were most exposed to the vengeance of Athens, and therefore most averse to revolt. His moderate use of victory ensured the good-will of the vanquished. The various parts of a plan, thus artfully combined, mutually assisted each other; the success of one undertaking contributed to that of the next which followed it; and, at length, without any considerable miscarriage, he had rendered himself master of most places in the peninsulas of Acta, Sithonia, and Palléné.

Amphi-
polis re-
volts to
Brasidas,

The loss of Amphipolis was that which most deeply afflicted the Athenians: a rich and populous city, beautifully situate on a small but well cultivated island, surrounded by the river Strymon, the banks of which supplied excellent timber, and other materials of naval strength. By possessing this town, the Spartans now commanded both branches of the river, and might thus pass, without interruption, to the Athenian colonies, or subjects, on the coast of Thrace; seize, or plunder, the gold mines opposite to the isle of Thasos; and ravage the fertile fields of the Thracian Chersonesus. The conquest of a place so essential to the enemy, had exercised the courage, the eloquence, and

and the dexterity of Brasidas. He formed a conspiracy with the malcontents in the place, skilfully disposed his army before the walls, harangued the assembly of the people. A most seasonable promptitude distinguished all his measures; yet the Athenian Eucleus, who commanded the garrison, found time to send a vessel to Thasos, requesting immediate and effectual relief.

The Athenians had committed the government of that island, as well as the direction of the mines on the opposite continent, to the celebrated historian of a war, in which he was a meritorious, though unfortunate, actor. Without a moment's delay, Thucydides put to sea with seven gallies, and arrived in the mouth of the Strymon the same day on which his assistance had been demanded. But it was already too late to save Amphipolis²⁴. The Spartan general, who had exact information of all the measures of the besieged, well knew the importance of anticipating the arrival of Thucydides, whose name was highly respected by the Greek colonies in Thrace, and whose influence was considerable among the native Barbarians. Brasidas, therefore, proposed such a capitulation to the Amphipolitans as it seemed imprudent to refuse. They were to be released from the tribute which they had hitherto paid the Athenians; to enjoy the utmost degree of political independence, not inconsistent with the alliance of Sparta; even the Athenian garrison, if they continued in the place, were to be entitled to all the rights of citizens; and such per-

notwith-
standing
the activity
of Thucy-
dides the
historian;

²⁴ Thucyd. p. 322.

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which
saves Eion.

Brasidas's
success oc-
casions cla-
mours and
impeach-
ments in
Athens.

sons as chose to leave it, were granted a reason-
able time to remove their families and their pro-
perty. The last condition was embraced by the
Athenians, and their more determined partizans.
They retired to the neighbouring town of Eion,
situate near the sea, on the northern branch of the
Strymon; a place secured against every hostile
assault by the skill and activity of Thucydides.

Towards the end of winter, the full extent of
Brasidas's success was made known at Athens. The
assembly was in commotion; and the populace
were the more enraged at their losses, as it now
appeared so easy to have prevented them, either by
guarding the narrow defiles which led to their
Macedonian possessions, or by sending their fleet
with a seasonable reinforcement to their feeble gar-
risons in those parts. Their own neglect had oc-
casioned the public disgrace; but with the usual
injustice and absurdity accompanying popular dis-
contents, they exculpated themselves, and banished
their generals. Thucydides was involved in this
cruel sentence. An armament was sent to Mace-
don; and new commanders were named to oppose
Brasidas.

The Spar-
tans avail
themselves
of it to ob-
tain a
truce for a
year.

But the designs of that commander, who had
begun to build vessels on the Strymon, and aspired
at nothing less than succeeding to the authority,
without exercising the oppression, of Athens, over
those extensive shores, were more successfully op-
posed by the envy of the Spartan magistrates. The
pride of the nobility was wounded by the glory of
an expedition, in which they had no share; and
their

their selfishness, while it obstinately prevented the supplies necessary to complete the plan of Brasidas, was eager to reap the profit of his past success. The restoration of their kinsmen taken at Sphacteria formed the object of their fondest wish; and they expected that the Athenians might listen to a proposal for that purpose, in order to recover the places which they had lost, and to check the fortunate career of a prudent and enterprising general. The Athenians readily entered into these views; it was determined that matters of such importance should be discussed with leisure and impartiality; a truce was therefore agreed on for a year between the contending republics.

This transaction was concluded in the ninth summer of the war. It was totally unexpected by Brasidas, who received the voluntary submission of Scioné and Menda, two places of considerable importance in the peninsula of Palléné; of the former, indeed, before he was acquainted with the suspension of hostilities; but of the latter, even after he was apprised of that treaty.

While the active valour of Brasidas prevented the confirmation of peace, the conscious worthlessness of Cleon promoted the renewal, or rather the continuance, of war. The glory of Athens was the perpetual theme of his discourse. He exhorted his countrymen to punish the perfidy of Sparta, in abetting the insolent revolt of Menda and Scioné; and to employ his own skill and bravery, which had been so successfully exerted on the coast of Peloponnesus, to repair their declining fortune in

Mace-

Olymp.
lxxxix. 2.
A.C. 423.

The war
renewed.
Olymp.
lxxxix. 3.
A.C. 422.

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Macedonia. The Athenians listened to the specious advice of this turbulent declaimer, who, in the ensuing spring, sailed to the Macedonian coast with a fleet of thirty galleys, twelve hundred citizens, heavy-armed, a squadron of three hundred horse, and a powerful body of light-armed auxiliaries. The surrender of Menda and Torona, whose inhabitants were treated with every excess of cruelty, encouraged him to attack Amphipolis. With this design, having collected his forces at Eion, he waited the arrival of some Macedonian troops, promised by Perdiccas, who having quarrelled with the Spartan general, deceitfully flattered the hopes of his antagonist.

Battle of
Amphi-
polis.

The army of Cleon contained the flower of the Athenian youth, whose ardent valour disdained a precarious dependence on Barbarian aid. They accused the cowardice of their leader, which was only equalled by his incapacity, and lamented their own hard fate in being subjected to the authority of a man so unworthy to command them. The impatient temper of an arrogant demagogue was ill fitted to endure these seditious complaints. He hastily led his troops before the place, without previously examining the strength of the walls, the situation of the ground, the number or disposition of the enemy. Brasidas, meanwhile, had taken proper measures to avail himself of the known imprudence of his adversary. A considerable body of men had been concealed in the woody mountain Cerdylum, which overhangs Amphipolis. The greater part of the army were drawn up, ready for
action,

action, at the several gates of the city. Clearidas, who commanded there, had orders to rush forth at a given signal, while Brasidas in person, conducting a select band of intrepid followers, watched the first opportunity for attack. The plan, contrived with so much skill, was executed with equal dexterity and precision. Confounded with the rapidity of such an unexpected and complicated charge, the enemy fled amain, abandoning their shields, and exposing their naked backs to the swords and spears of the pursuers. The forces on either side amounted to about three thousand; six hundred Athenians fell victims to the folly of Cleon, who, though foremost in the flight, was arrested by the hand of a Myrcinian targeteer.

Death of
Cleon.

His death might appease the manes of his unfortunate countrymen; but nothing could alleviate the sorrow of the victors for the loss of their admired Brasidas, who received a mortal wound while he advanced to the attack. He was conveyed alive to Amphipolis, and enjoyed the consolation of his last victory, in which only seven men had perished on the Spartan side. The sad magnificence of his funeral was adorned by the splendour of military honours; but what was still more honourable to Brasidas, he was sincerely lamented by the grateful tears of numerous communities, who regarded his virtues and abilities as the surest pledges of their own happiness and security. The citizens of Amphipolis paid an extraordinary tribute to his memory. Having demolished every monument of their ancient leaders and patriots, they

Death and
honours of
Brasidas.

C H A P. XVII. they erected the statue of Brasidas in the most conspicuous square of the city, appointed annual games to be celebrated at his tomb, and sacrificed to his revered shade, as to the great hero and original founder of their community²⁵.

Peace of
Nicias.
Olymp.
lxxxix. 4.
A.C. 421.

The battle of Amphipolis removed the principal obstacles to peace. There was not any Spartan general qualified to accomplish the designs of Brasidas. The Athenians, dejected by defeat, and humbled by disgrace, wanted the bold imposing eloquence of Cleon, to disguise their weakness, and varnish their misfortunes. With the disheartened remains of an enfeebled armament, they despaired of recovering their Macedonian possessions; and the greater part returned home, well disposed for an accommodation with the enemy. These dispositions were confirmed by the pacific temper of Nicias, who had succeeded to the influence of Cleon, and who fortunately discovered in the moderation of Pleistoanax, king of Sparta, a coadjutor extremely solicitous to promote his views. During winter, several friendly conferences were held between the commissioners of the two republics; and, towards the commencement of the ensuing spring, a treaty of peace, and soon afterwards a defensive alliance, for fifty years, was ratified by the kings and ephori of Sparta on the one side, and by the archons and generals of Athens on the other. In consequence of this negociation, which was intended to comprehend the respective allies of the contracting powers, all places and prisoners, taken in

²⁵ Thucyd. p. 307.

the course of the war, were to be mutually restored; the revolted cities in Macedon were specified by name; but it was regulated that the Athenians should not require from them any higher revenue than that apportioned by the justice of Aristides ²⁶.

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In all their transactions, the Greeks were ever prodigal of promises, but backward in performance; and, amidst the continual rotation of authority, magistrates easily found excuses for violating the conditions granted by their predecessors. The known principles of republican inconstancy, ever ready to vibrate between excessive animosity and immoderate friendship, might likewise suggest a reason for converting the treaty of peace into a contract of alliance. But this measure, in the present case, was the effect of necessity. Athens and Sparta might make mutual restitution, because their respective interests required it. But no motive of interest engaged the former power to restore Nicaea to the Megareans, or the towns of Solium and Anaclorum to Corinth. The Thebans, shortly before the peace, had seized the Athenian fortress of Panactum, situate on the frontier of Bœotia. They were still masters of Plataea. Elated by their signal victory at Delium, they could not be supposed willing to abandon their conquests, or even much inclined to peace. It was still less to be expected that the Macedonian cities should, for the convenience of Sparta, submit to the severe yoke

Dissatisfaction of the Lacedæmonian allies.

²⁶ Thucyd. p. 354, & seqq.

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of Athens, from which they had recently been delivered; nor could it be hoped that even the inferior states of Peloponnesus should tamely lay down their arms, without obtaining any of those advantages with which they had been long flattered by their Spartan allies.

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Discontents fomented by the Corinthians.—The Argive Alliance.—To which Athens accedes.—Birth and Education of Alcibiades.—His Friendship with Socrates.—His Character—And Views—Which are favoured by the State of Greece.—He deceives the Spartan Ambassadors.—Renewal of the Peloponnesian War.—Battle of Mantinæa.—Tumults in Argos.—Massacre of the Scioneans.—Cruel Conquest of Melos.

THE voluptuous, yet turbulent citizens of Corinth, enjoy the odious distinction of renewing a war which their intrigues and animosities had first kindled. Under pretence of having taken an oath never to abandon the Macedonian cities, they declined being parties in the general treaty of peace. The alliance between Athens and Sparta, in which it was stipulated, that these contracting powers should be entitled to make such alterations in the treaty as circumstances might require, the Corinthians affected, with some reason, to consider as a conspiracy against the common liberties of Greece¹. Fired with this idea, they hastened to Argos, in order to animate that republic with the same passions which rankled in their own breasts. Hav-

C H A P.
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tents fo-
mented by
the Co-
rinthians.

¹ The clause was worded in such a manner as might naturally excite alarm: Προσθῆναι καὶ ἀφελῆν ἵτις αὐτὰν ἈΜΦΟΙΝ τοῖς πόλεσιν δοκῇ. Thucyd. l. v. p. 284.

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ing roused the ambition of the *magistrates*, they artfully reminded the *people* of the glory of Agamemnon, recalled to the Argives their ancient and just pre-eminence in the Peloponnesus, and conjured them to maintain the honour of that illustrious peninsula, which had been so shamefully abandoned by the pusillanimity, or betrayed by the selfishness, of Sparta.

The Argive alliance.
Olymp. lxxxix. 4.
A. C. 421.

The Argives wanted neither power nor inclination to assume that important office. During the Peloponnesian war, they had observed the principles of a prudent neutrality, equally favourable to their populousness and their wealth. Their protection was courted by Mantinæa, the most powerful city in Arcadia, which had recently conquered some villages in its neighbourhood, to which Sparta laid claim. The Elians, long hostile to Sparta, eagerly promoted the Argive alliance, which was farther strengthened by the speedy accession of the Macedonian allies, whose inhabitants were not more flattered by the kind zeal of Corinth, than provoked by the cruel indifference of Sparta. Thebes and Megara were equally offended with their Lacedæmonian allies, and equally inclined to war. But a rigid aristocracy prevailed in those states, whose ambitious magistrates, trembling for their personal authority, and that of their families, declined entering into confederacy with free democratical republics².

To which Athens accedes.

But this democratical association soon acquired an accession still more important, and received into

² Thucyd. l. v. p. 371.

its bosom the fountain of liberty itself; even the republic of Athens. This extraordinary event happened in the year following the negotiation between Athens and Sparta. It was effected by means extremely remote from the experience of modern times; means which it is incumbent on us to explain, lest the political transactions of Greece should appear too fluctuating and capricious to afford a proper subject for history.

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Olymp.
xc. i.
A. C. 420.

Amidst the factious turbulence of senates and assemblies, no measure could be adopted by one party, without being condemned by another. Many Athenians disapproved the peace of Nicias³; but the general blaze of opposition was eclipsed by the splendour of one man, who, on this occasion, first displayed those singular but unhappy talents, which proved fatal to himself and to his country. Alcibiades had not yet reached his thirtieth year, the age required by the wisdom of Solon for being entitled to speak in the assembly. But every advantageous circumstance of birth and fortune, talents natural and acquired, accomplishments of mind and body, pleaded an exception in favour of this extraordinary character, which, producing at once flowers and fruit, united with the blooming vivacity of youth, the ripened wisdom of experience⁴. His father, the rich and generous Clinias, derived his extraction from the heroic

Birth and
education
of Alcibi-
ades.

³ The Greeks sometimes distinguished treaties by the names of those who made them: the peace of Cimon; the peace of Nicias; and, as we shall see hereafter, the peace of Antalcidas.

⁴ Plut. & Nepos in Alcibiad.

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Ajax, and had distinguished his own valour and patriotism in the glorious scenes of the Persian war. In the female line, the son of Clinias was allied to the eloquence and magnanimity of Pericles, who, as his nearest surviving kinsman, was entrusted with the care of his minority. But the statesman, who governed with undivided sway the affairs of Athens and of Greece, could not bestow much attention on this important domestic task. The tender years of Alcibiades were committed to the illiberal discipline of mercenary preceptors; his youth and inexperience were beset by the destructive adulation of servile flatterers,—until the young Athenian, having begun to relish the poems of Homer, the admiration of which is congenial to every great mind, learned from thence to despise the pedantry of the one, and to detest the meanness of the other⁵.

His early
attach-
ment to
Socrates.

From Homer Alcibiades early imbibed that ambition for excellence which is the great lesson of the immortal bard. Having attained the verge of manhood, he readily distinguished, among the crowd of rhetoricians and sophists, the superior merit of Socrates, who, rejecting all factitious and abstruse studies, confined his speculations to matters of real importance and utility; who, having never travelled to Egypt and the East in search of *mysterious* knowledge, reasoned with an Attic perspicuity and freedom; and who, being unbiassed by the system of any master, and always master of himself, thought,

⁵ Plut. in Alcibiad.

spoke, and acted with equal independence and dignity. An amiable and most instructive writer, the disciple and friend of Socrates, has left an admirable panegyric of the uniform temperance, the unshaken probity, the diffusive benevolence invariably displayed in his virtuous life of seventy years⁶. His distinguishing excellencies are justly appreciated by Xenophon, a scholar worthy of his master⁷; but the youthful levity of Alcibiades (for youth is seldom capable of estimating the highest of all merits, the undeviating tenor of an innocent and useful life) was chiefly delighted with the splendour of particular actions. The eloquence, rather than the innocence of Socrates, excited his admiration. He was charmed with that inimitable raillery, that clear comprehensive logic, which baffled the most acute disputants of the Athenian schools⁸; that erect independence of mind, which disdained the insolence of power, the pride of wealth, and the vanity of popular fame, was well fitted to attract the congenial esteem of Alcibiades, who aspired beyond the beaten paths of vulgar greatness; nor could the gallant youth be less affected by the invincible intrepidity of Socrates, when, quitting the shade of speculation, and covered with the helm and cuirass, he grasped the massy spear, and justified, by his strenuous exertion in the field of battle, the useful lessons of his philosophy⁹.

Socrates in his turn (since it is easier for a wise man to correct the errors of reason than to con-

Their mutual obligations and friendship.

⁶ Xenoph. Memorabil. Socrat.

⁷ See particularly Xenoph. Apolog. Socrat. ⁸ Plato, passim.

⁹ Xenoph. Memorab. Socrat. pp. 449. 804. 818.

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quer the delusions of sentiment) was deeply affected with the beauty of Alcibiades¹⁰; a beauty depending, not on the transient flower of youth, and the seductive delicacy of effeminate graces, but on the ineffable harmony of a form which realised the sublime conceptions of Homer and Phidias concerning their fabulous divinities, and which shone in the autumn of life with undiminished effulgence¹¹. The affection of Socrates, though infinitely removed from impurity, resembled rather the ardour of love than the calm moderation of friendship. The sage, whose company was courted by his other disciples, himself courted the company of Alcibiades; and when the ungrateful youth sometimes escaped to his licentious companions, the philosopher pursued him with the eagerness of a father or master, anxious to recover a fugitive son or slave¹². At the battle of Potidæa he saved the life of his pupil, and in order to gratify the love of military glory, which already animated his youthful bosom, the sage obtained for Alcibiades the prize of valour, which the universal consent of the Athenians thought due to himself. At the fatal engagement of Delium, Alcibiades, it is said, had an opportunity of returning the more substantial favour, by saving the precious life of Socrates¹³; and it may

¹⁰ Vid. Xenoph. and Plato, *passim*. Socrates often acknowledges the danger of beauty, and its power over himself; but loses no opportunity to caution his disciples against the shameful passions, and abominable vices, which flow from this fair source. Vid. *Memorab. Socrat.* l. ii. *passim*, & l. v. c. iii. *Sympos.* c. iv. p. 246.

¹¹ Plut. in Alcibiad.

¹² Plut. *ibid*.

¹³ Strabo, p. 330. & Plut. in Alcibiad.

well be supposed that an interchange of such important favours would straiten the bands of their mutual friendship, during which the powers of reason and fancy were directed, with unabating diligence, to improve the understanding, and excite the virtue of Alcibiades.

But this favourite youth laboured under a defect, which could not be compensated by the highest birth, the most splendid fortune, the noblest endowments of mind and body, and even the inestimable friendship of Socrates. He wanted an honest ¹⁴ heart. This we are warranted to affirm on the authority of contemporary writers, who acknowledge, that first admiration, and then interest, was the foundation of his attachment to the illustrious sage, by whose instruction he expected to become, not a good, but an able, man. Some inclination to virtue he might, in such company, perhaps feel, but more probably feign; and the nicest discernment might mistake the real character of a man, who could adopt, at pleasure, the most opposite manners; and who, as will appear from the subsequent events of his various life, could surpass the splendid magnificence of Athens, or the rigid frugality of Sparta; could conform, as interest required, to the laborious exercises of the Thebans, or to the voluptuous indolence of Ionia; assume the soft effeminacy of an Eastern prince, or rival the sturdy vices of the drunken Thracians ¹⁵.

Deceitful
character
of Alcibi-
ades.

¹⁴ Lyfias cont. Alcibiad. & Xenoph. Memorab. Socrat. l. i. p. 715.

¹⁵ Nepos in Alcibiad.

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His views

The first specimen of his political conduct discovered the extraordinary resources of his versatile mind. He opposed the peace of Nicias, as the work of a rival, whom he wished to disgrace. His ambition longed for war, and the Spartans deserved his resentment, having, in all their transactions with Athens, testified the utmost respect for Nicias, while they were at no pains to conceal their want of regard for himself, though his family had been long connected with their republic by an intercourse of hospitality, and he had endeavoured to strengthen that connection by his personal good offices to the Lacedæmonians taken in Sphacteria. To gratify at once his resentment, his ambition, and his jealousy, he determined to renew the war with Sparta; a design by no means difficult at the present juncture.

favoured
by the
state of
Greece.
Olymp.
xc. i.
A. C. 420.

In compliance with the peace of Nicias, the Spartans withdrew their troops from Amphipolis; but they could restore neither that city, nor the neighbouring places in Macedon, to the dominion of Athens. The Athenians, agreeably to the treaty, allowed the captives taken in Sphacteria to meet the longing embraces of their kinsmen and friends; but good policy forbade their surrendering Pylus, until the enemy had performed some of the conditions stipulated in return. Mutual unwillingness, or inability, to comply with the articles of peace, sowed the seeds of animosity, which found a favourable soil in both republics. The authority of those magistrates, who supported the pacific measures of Nicias and Pleistoanax, had expired. The

Spartan

Spartan youth wished, by new hostilities, to cancel the memory of a war, which had been carried on without profit, and terminated with dishonour. But the wiser part perceived that better success could not be expected while the Athenians possessed Pylus. In their eagerness to recover that fortress, they renewed their alliance with the Thebans, from whom they received Panactum, which they hoped to exchange for Pylus; forgetting, in this transaction, an important clause in their treaty with Athens, "that neither of the contracting powers should, without mutual communication and consent, conclude any new alliance." The Thebans rejoiced in the prospect of embroiling the affairs of Athens and Sparta; and the Corinthians, guided by the same hostile views, readily concurred with the Thebans, and openly re-entered into the Lacedæmonian confederacy¹⁶.

Having concluded this negotiation, the Spartans, who yielded to none in the art of dissembling, dispatched ambassadors to Athens, excusing what they termed an apparent infringement of the treaty, and requesting that state to accept Panactum (which had been carefully dismantled) in exchange for Pylus. The senate of Athens heard their proposal without suspicion, especially as they declared themselves invested with full powers to embrace every reasonable plan of present accommodation and permanent friendship. It now remained for the ambassadors to propose their demand in the po-

He out-
wits the
Spartan
ambassa-
dors.
Olymp.
xc. 1.
A.C. 420.

¹⁶ Thucyd. l. v. passim.

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pular assembly, which, they had reason to hope, might be deceived still more easily than the senate. But in this expectation they were disappointed by a contrivance of Alcibiades, no less singular than audacious. Having invited the ambassadors to an entertainment, during which he talked of their republic with more than his wonted respect, and testified the utmost solicitude for the success of their negotiation, he observed to them, that one circumstance gave him much concern, their having mentioned full powers. They must beware of repeating that error in the assembly, because the natural rapacity of the populace, apprised of that circumstance, would not fail to insist on such conditions as the honour of Sparta could not possibly comply with. If they concealed the extent of their commission, the declaring of which could only serve to indicate timidity on the one side, and to provoke insolence on the other, he pledged himself to obtain the recovery of Pylus, and the gratification of their utmost hopes. On this occasion the Spartans injudiciously confided in a man, who had been irritated by the former neglect and ingratitude of their country. When they appeared next day in the assembly, Alcibiades demanded, with a loud voice, the object and extent of their commission. According to the concerted plan, they denied their having full powers. The artful Athenian, affecting a transport of indignation, arraigned the audacity and baseness of a people by whom his own unsuspecting temper had been egregiously abused. " But yesterday they declared their full powers in the senate; they

they denied to-day what yesterday they displayed with ostentation. Such (I now perceive it) is the usual duplicity of their republic. It is thus they have restored Amphipolis. It is thus, Athenians! they have restored the neighbouring towns in Macedon: it is thus they have, indeed, put you in possession of Panactum, but with demolished walls; and after concluding an alliance with Athens, ratified by solemn oath, most treacherously and daringly infringed it, by entering into a league with Thebes, your determined and inveterate enemy. Can you still, men of Athens! tamely submit to such indignities? Do you not expel such traitors (pointing to the ambassadors) from your presence, and from your city?" This extraordinary harangue totally disconcerted the Spartans. Had their confusion allowed them to extenuate their fault by declaring the truth, the least reflection must have suggested, that Alcibiades would represent their simple story as a new turn of ingenious artifice. They retired abruptly from the assembly¹⁷; Nicias, and the other partizans of Sparta, shared their disgrace; and the Athenians were soon afterwards persuaded by Alcibiades to embrace the Argive alliance¹⁸.

It might be expected, that the weight of such a powerful confederacy should have speedily crushed the debility of Sparta, already exhausted by the

The Peloponnesian war renewed.

¹⁷ Thucyd. mentions the shock of an earthquake, which occasioned the dissolution of that assembly, before coming to any conclusion.

¹⁸ Thucyd. l. v. p. 374. & seqq. Plut. in Alcibiad.

former

CHAP. XVIII.
 Olymp. xc. 2.
 A.C. 419. former war. But the military operations of Greece depended less on the relative strength of contending powers, than on the alternate preponderance of domestic factions. In the year following the treaty, the Athenians sent a small body of troops to assist their Peloponnesian allies in the reduction of Epidaurus, Tegea, and other hostile cities in Argolis and Arcadia. Yet in the ensuing year, when the Spartans, dreading the loss of some cities, and the defection of others, made a vigorous effort to retrieve their authority in Peloponnesus, the Athenians alone discovered little inclination, and exerted no activity, to obstruct their measures for that purpose. Pleistoanax being a partizan of the peace of Nicias, the Spartans entrusted the command to Agis, his more warlike colleague. All Lacedæmonians of the military age were summoned to the field. The dangerous expedient of arming the Helots was adopted on this important emergence. The Spartan allies shewed unusual ardour in their cause. The Thebans sent ten thousand foot, and one thousand horsemen¹⁹; the Corinthians two thousand heavy-armed men; the Megarians almost an equal number; the ancient cities of Palléné and Sicyon in Achaia gave a powerful and ready assistance; while the small, but generous republic of Phlius, whose territory, bordering on Argolis, was appointed for the rendez-

¹⁹ They had, however, but five hundred horses; ἱππὺς πεντακοσίας καὶ ἀνιππῆς ἰσολ. Perhaps the ἀνιππῆς, those not provided with horses, served as attendants on the horsemen. The mixing of light infantry with the cavalry was frequent in later times; but of this hereafter,

vous of the confederates, took the field with the whole body of citizens and slaves capable of bearing arms²⁰.

The Argives observed the approaching storm, and prepared to resist it. The Eleans and Mantineans joined them; and although the Athenians were long expected in vain, the Argives did not lose courage, but boldly took the field to oppose the invaders. The skilful movements of king Agis intercepted their return to Argos; the high grounds above them were occupied by the Corinthians and Phliasians; their retreat towards Nemea was cut off by the Bœotians and Megarians. A battle seemed inevitable in the winding vale of Argos; but it is easier to admire, than explain, the subsequent conduct of either army. Whether the Argive commanders²¹ were disconcerted by the judicious position of the enemy, or that compassion touched their minds on perceiving such numerous bodies of men, chiefly natives of the same peninsula, sprung from the same blood, and speaking the same Doric tongue, prepared to embroil their parricidal hands in kindred blood; or that, being secretly partizans of aristocracy²², they were unwilling to come to extremities with Sparta; it is certain, that instead of joining battle, they entered

The Spartan and Argive armies face each other, but part without engaging. Olymp. xc. 3. A.C. 418.

²⁰ Thucyd. l. v. p. 384, & seqq.

²¹ Or rather Thrasylus, who was one of five generals, but who seems to have enjoyed some pre-eminence over his colleagues. Perhaps it was his turn to command.

²² Alciphron, who, with Thrasylus, was the principal agent in this affair, was the “*πρόεδρος Λακεδαιμονίων*,” the public host of the Lacedæmonians. Thucyd. p. 386.

into

C H A P. into conference, with the Lacedæmonian king. In
 XVIII. consequence of this unexpected measure, a truce
 was concluded between the chiefs, without the concurrence or knowledge of the officers or troops in either army. The Argives, Thrasyllus and Alciphron, engaged that their countrymen should give complete satisfaction for the injuries of which they were accused; and king Agis, whose authority, by the Spartan laws, was absolute in the field, led off his obsequious army.

Discon-
 tents here-
 by occa-
 sioned in
 both states.

Whatever might be the cause of this measure, it occasioned (after the first pause of silent astonishment) universal discontent, followed by loud and licentious clamours. The Spartans complained, “ That, after assembling such a body of men as had scarcely ever been collected in Peloponnesus, whose attachment to their cause was ardent, whose numbers and courage were invincible, and after surrounding their enemies on every side, and depriving them of every resource, the glorious hope, or rather certainty, of the most complete and important victory, should have been sacrificed, in one moment, by the caprice, the cowardice, or the corruption of their general.” The Argives lamented, “ That their numerous enemies, whom they had a fair opportunity of engaging in their own country, should have been allowed to escape from their hands by a hasty and ill-judged composition.” Nor did they confine their resentment to vain complaints. The most daring or most seditious attacked the houses of Thrasyllus and Alciphron. The rest soon joined in the tumult. The effects

effects of the generals were plundered or confiscated; and their lives were saved, with difficulty, by the respected sanctuary of Argive Juno.

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Though the Greeks, and indeed the ancients in general, seldom employed resident ambassadors in foreign states, Alcibiades was then invested with that character at Argos. His activity would not fail to promote the popular tumult, in which his own and the Athenian interest was concerned. On a future occasion he boasted, that, chiefly at his instigation, the Argives and their allies were persuaded to break the truce; a measure greatly facilitated by the long-expected arrival of the Athenian transports, conveying a reinforcement of twelve hundred soldiers, and a body of three hundred cavalry. Encouraged by this event, the Argives, regardless of the truce, attacked the ancient and wealthy city of Orchomenus in Arcadia, which, after a feeble resistance, submitted to their arms. They next proceeded to lay siege to the neighbouring town of Tegea, a design extremely contrary to the inclination of the Eleans, who were eager to chastise the inhabitants of Lepreum, a district on their own frontier. The Argives, however, paid no regard to their demands; and the Eleans, offended by this instance of contempt, returned home in disgust.

Alcibiades persuades the Argives to break the truce.
Olymp.
xc. 3.
A. C. 418.

The Lacedæmonians learned with indignation the submission of Orchomenus, the siege of Tegea, and the open infraction of the treaty. They had formerly murmured against the imprudent or perfidious measures of king Agis; but when they felt

The Spartans take the field.

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the effects of his misconduct, their resentment became outrageous. In the first emotions of their animosity, they determined to destroy his house, and to subject him to a fine of several thousand pounds sterling, which, in all probability, he would have been unable to pay. But his eloquence and address appeased the general clamour; and, as the anger of popular assemblies is easily converted into pity, he was again taken into favour. His known talents for war recommended him to the command of the army; and he assured his countrymen, that his future services should speedily wipe off the stain from his character. The Spartans, however, first elected on this occasion ten counsellors to attend their kings in the field, to restrain their too precipitate resolves, and control their too absolute authority.

Battle of
Manti-
næa.

Having taken this precaution, the necessity of which seemed justified by recent experience, they summoned the assistance of their allies, whose ardour to renew hostilities was equal to their own. They proceeded with a numerous army (though inferior to that formerly collected, as their confederates beyond the Isthmus had not yet time to join them), and marched directly to the town of Mantinæa, expecting either to take that place, or to oblige the enemy to defend it, by withdrawing their troops from the siege of Tegea. The approach of the Argives prevented the surprise of Mantinæa; and both armies, whose ambition or resentment had been so lately disappointed of an opportunity to display

play their valour or their fury, eagerly prepared for an engagement.

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Military
orations.

According to ancient custom, the leaders of the several nations addressed their respective troops. The Mantinæans were animated “ by the sight of their city, for the defence of which, as well as for the safety of their wives and children, they were exhorted valiantly to contend. The event of the battle must determine the important alternative of dominion and servitude ; dominion which they had lately assumed over various cities in Arcadia, and servitude, which they had already suffered under the cruel tyranny of Sparta.” The Argives were reminded “ of their ancient pre-eminence in Peloponnesus, which they had recently recovered, and which their honour was now called to maintain. They were reminded of the long and bloody wars which they had formerly carried on, in order to repel the usurpation of a powerful and ambitious neighbour. This was the same enemy who actually provoked their arms, and gave them an opportunity of revenging, in one day, the accumulated injustice of many centuries.” The Athenians heard, and repeated, “ That it was glorious to march at the head of gallant and faithful allies, and to shew themselves deserving of their hereditary renown. They yielded to none in bravery ; their power was unrivalled ; and when they had overcome the Lacedæmonians, even in the Peloponnesus, their dominion would be more extensive and secure.”

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The Spartans victorious.

The Spartans briefly exhorted their followers, and each other, “to exert that innate valour which had ever animated their breasts, and which could receive no additional force from a tedious display of useless words.” Thus saying, they marched with a slow and firm step, regulated by the sound of the flute, to meet the impetuous onset²³ of the Argives and Athenians. Above a thousand of the former, chosen from the flower of the noblest youth of Argos, had been employed, since the first dissensions occasioned by the peace of Nicias, in the constant exercise of arms, in order to maintain the honourable pretensions of their country. They behaved with signal bravery. The Athenians were not wanting to their ancient fame. The Manti-næans strenuously defended every thing most dear to them. But the allied army had been considerably weakened by the desertion of the Eleans; and the martial enthusiasm of king Agis, seconded by the persevering valour of the Spartans²⁴, decided the fortune

²³ The admirable verses of Milton, who was a diligent reader of Thucydides, are the best commentary on this battle.

Anon they move

In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders, such as rais'd
To height of noblest temper heroes old,
Arming to battle; and instead of rage,
Deliberate valour breath'd firm and unmov'd, &c.

Par. Lost, b. i.

²⁴ If the text is not corrupt, the words of Thucydides are very remarkable: *Αλλα μαλιστα δη κατα παντα τη εμπειρια Λακεδαιμονιοι ελασσωθεντες, τη αιδρεια εδεξαν εχ ησσον περιγενομενοι.* p. 394. “That the Lacedæmonians, exceedingly inferior as they appeared on this occasion to the enemy in military skill, shewed themselves as much superior to them in true manly courage.” It appears from the description

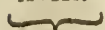
fortune of the battle. The allies were repulsed, broken, thrown into disorder, and put to flight. The Spartans, unwilling to irritate their despair, or superstitiously observing an ancient maxim, which enjoined them “to make a bridge for a flying enemy,” did not continue the pursuit, but speedily returned home to celebrate the Carnean festival, rejoicing in having restored the lustre of their arms, and recovered their authority in the Peloponnesus.

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This, in fact, proved the immediate consequence of a battle, which was not so bloody as might have been expected, the vanquished having lost *eleven*, and the victors only *three*, hundred. But the revolutions of Greece chiefly depended on the fluctuating politics of domestic factions. The Spartans had a numerous party in Argos itself, who, emboldened by the recent victory of their friends, immediately took arms, abolished the popular government, destroyed the partisans of Athens, abjured the league with that state, and entered into a new confederacy with Sparta. This event hap-

Tumults
in Argos.

tion of the battle, that the Lacedæmonians were defective, not in skill, but in discipline. In approaching the enemy, their right wing extended too far, which frequently happened from the desire of every soldier to cover his unarmed side by the shield of the next person on his right. In consequence of this tendency, the Lacedæmonian left wing was over-reached by the enemy's right. Agis ordered the Skiritæ and Brasidians to wheel from their places on the right, and lengthen the front of the left wing: commanding the battalions of Hipponoidas and Aristocles to fill up the vacuity occasioned by this movement. But these generals absolutely refused to obey orders, and were afterwards banished Sparta on that account. Thucyd. p. 393, & seqq.

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pened a few weeks after the engagement, and towards the close of the fourteenth winter of the Peloponnesian war. During the two following years, Argos paid dearly for a moment of transient splendour, having undergone three bloody revolutions, which renewed the atrocities of Corcyrean sedition. The contest ended, as in Corcyra, in favour of the Athenians and democracy.

Massacre
of the
Scioneans.

The affairs of the Peloponnesus had long occupied, without engrossing, the attention of Athens. The year preceding her alliance with Argos, the Athenians reduced the rebellious city of Scioné, in the peninsula of Palléné, against which their resentment had been provoked to the utmost fury, because the Scioneans, though inhabiting a country almost surrounded by the sea, had defied the naval power of Athens, and, amidst the misfortunes of that state, revolted to her enemies. The citizens of Scioné became the victims of a revenge equally cruel and imprudent. The males, above the age of puberty, were put to the sword; the women and children dragged into servitude; the name and honour of the city extinguished for ever; and the territory planted with a new colony, consisting chiefly of Platæan exiles. These atrocious cruelties alarmed the terror, exasperated the resentment, and invigorated the resistance, of the neighbouring republics. Their defence was undertaken by Perdiccas, king of Macedon, whom the Athenians therefore interdicted the use of the Grecian seas. But that ambitious people made so little progress in reducing the Macedonian coast,

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that

that they finally desisted from this design, contenting themselves with guarding those places which still preserved their allegiance, with re-establishing domestic order, and with collecting the customary tribute from their numerous colonies and dependencies.

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The productive industry diffused through all branches of the community, the equality of private fortune, the absence of habitual luxury, together with the natural advantages of their soil and climate, enabled the Greeks to flourish amidst furious and bloody wars. After a short period of tranquillity, their exuberant population overflowed, and was obliged to discharge itself in foreign colonies or conquests. Such a period Athens enjoyed for five years after the peace of Nicias, as the Macedonian and Argive wars only employed her activity, without exhausting her strength. The necessity of exerting her superfluous vigour in some useful and honourable design, was fatally experienced, in the year following, by the unfortunate island of Melos, one of the largest of the Cyclades, lying directly opposite to the Cape of Malea, the southern promontory of Laconia.

The Athenians attack Melos.
Olymp. xci. 1.
A. C. 416.

This beautiful island, sixty miles in circumference, of a circular form, of an agreeable temperature, and affording, in peculiar perfection²⁵, the usual productions of a fine climate, had early in-

Description of that island.

²⁵ The island of Melos is every where impregnated with iron, bitumen, sulphur, and other minerals. It is described by Tournefort as a great laboratory. Its subterranean fires are supposed to give peculiar force and flavour to its wines and fruits.

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Confer-
ence be-
tween the
commis-
sioners of
Athens
and Me-
los.

vited the colonization of the Spartans; and the happy settlement had enjoyed political independence for seven hundred years. The strength and importance of the capital, which had the same name with the island, may be understood by the armament, of thirty ships, and near three thousand soldiers, which the Athenians brought against it. Before they commenced hostilities, either by attacking the city, or by ravaging the country, they sent ambassadors to the Melians, in order to persuade them to surrender, without incurring the danger or the punishment of an unequal, and probably a fruitless, resistance. The cautious islanders, well acquainted with the eloquence and address of the enemy with whom they had to contend, denied them the permission to speak before the public assembly, but appointed a deputation of the magistrates, to hear and examine their demands. The Athenian ambassadors were received in the senate-house, where a most important and interesting conference was held ²⁶, which, while it engages our compassion for the unhappy victims of ambition, explains the prevailing sentiments and opinions of the Greeks in matters of war and government, and illustrates the daring injustice of the Athenian republic. The ambassadors began the dialogue, by observing, “ That since the distrust of the Melians, probably arising from the conscious weakness of their cause, had refused them the liberty of speaking, in a continued oration, to the assembly of the people, they should use that mode of conference which seemed

²⁶ Thucyd. l. v. p. 400, & seqq.

most agreeable to the inclinations of their adversaries, and patiently listen to the objections which might occur to any part of their discourse."

Melians. "The proposal is just and reasonable; but you have come hither with an armed force, which renders you judges in your own cause. Though vanquished in debate, you may still conquer by arms; but if *we* yield in argument, we must submit to slavery." *Athenians*. "If you intend to talk of matters foreign to the subject, we have done." *M*. "It is surely excusable for those, whose all is at stake, to turn themselves on every side, and to suggest their suspicions and their doubts. But let the conference be carried on in the manner which you have proposed." *A*. "And, on both sides, let all superfluous arguments be omitted; either that *we*, having repelled and conquered the Persians, are entitled to govern the Greeks; or that *you*, being a colony of Lacedæmon, are entitled to independence. Let us speak like men of sense and experience, who know that the equal rules of justice are observed only by men of an equal condition; but that it belongs to the strong to command, and to the weak to obey; because such is the interest of both." *M*. "How can our interest and yours coincide?" *A*. "By submission, you will save your lives; and by preserving you, we will increase our own power." *M*. "Consider (for this also must be mentioned, since disregarding *justice*, you are governed only by *utility*) that your unprovoked invasion of the Melians will rouse the resentment of all Greece; will render all
neutral

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neutral states your enemies; and, if ever your empire should decline, (as what human grandeur is not subject to decay?) will expose you to a dreadful and just punishment." *A.* "The continuance of our empire is the care of fortune and the gods; the little that man can do to preserve it, *we* will not neglect. The liberty of Melos offends the pride of the neighbouring isles, and stirs them to rebellion. The interest of our present power must prevail over the apprehension of future danger." *M.* "While the Athenians are thus prepared to incur danger for the preservation of empire, and their subject islands to defy death for the hopes of freedom, would it not be the basest and most infamous cowardice in us, who have long enjoyed liberty, to decline any toil or danger for maintaining the most valuable and the most glorious of all human possessions?" *A.* "We are not come hither to dispute the prize of valour, but to offer terms of safety." *M.* "The event of war is uncertain; there is some hope in resistance, none in submission." *A.* "Flattering hope often deceives the prosperous and the powerful, but always destroys the weak and unfortunate, who, disregarding natural means of preservation, have recourse to idle dreams of the fancy, to omens, oracles, divination, and all the fallacious illusions of a vain superstition." *M.* "We know that it will be difficult for the Mælians to contend with the strength and fortune of Athens: yet we trust that the gods will support the justice of our cause; and that the Lacedæmonians, from whom we are descended,
moved

moved by a sense of honour, will defend their own blood." *A.* "Believe not that Athens will be forsaken by the gods. Ambition is implanted in man. The wisdom of providence, not an Athenian decree, has established the inevitable law, that the strong should govern the weak. As to the assistance of the Lacedæmonians, we sincerely congratulate your happy ignorance of their principles. Whatever equity prevails in their domestic institutions, they have but one rule respecting their neighbours, which is, to regulate all their transactions with them by their own conveniency." *M.* "It is chiefly that consideration which affords us hope, that they will not forsake an island which they have planted, lest they should be regarded as traitors, than which nothing could be more unfavourable to their interest, especially since Melos, lying in the neighbourhood of their own territories, would be a dangerous possession in the hands of an enemy." *A.* "The timid caution of the Lacedæmonians seldom takes the field, even against their inveterate enemies in the Peloponnesus, unless when their standard is attended by numerous allies. It is not to be imagined that, for the safety of a colony, they will alone cross the Cretan sea, to contend with the superior navy of Athens." *M.* "Should the Lacedæmonians be averse to fail, they can transport others in their stead; and the extent of the Cretan sea may elude the vigilance of your ships; or should that probability fail, the Lacedæmonians may attack your subjects on the continent, and accomplish the designs of the warlike
Bra-

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Brafidas." A. " You are determined, it seems, to learn, by fatal experience, that fear never compelled the Athenians to desist from their designs; especially never to raise the siege of any place which they had once invested. For during the whole of this long conference, you have not mentioned a single particular capable of affording any just ground of confidence. Deceived by the splendour of words, you talk of honour and independence, rejecting the offers of a powerful state, whose arms you are unable to resist, and whose protection you might obtain at the expence of a moderate tribute. Lest shame should have any share in this dangerous behaviour, we shall leave you to consult privately, only reminding you once more, that your present deliberations involve the fate of your country."

Magnanimity of the Melians.

The Athenian ambassadors retired; and shortly afterwards, the Melians recalled them, and " declared their unanimous resolution not to betray, in one unlucky hour, the liberty which they had maintained for seven hundred years; depending on the vigorous assistance of their Lacedæmonian kinsmen, and trusting especially in that divine providence which had hitherto most wonderfully preserved them amidst the general convulsions of Greece. But they entreated the Athenians to accept their offers of neutrality, and to abstain from unprovoked violence." The ambassadors prepared for returning to the camp, leaving the commissioners with a sarcastic threat, " That of all men, in such a delicate situation, the Melians alone thought

Conquest of Melos, and cruel treatment of the inhabitants.

thought the future more certain than the past, and would grievously suffer for their folly, in preferring to the proposals of certain and immediate safety, the deceitfulness of hope, the instability of fortune, and the vain prospect of Lacedæmonian aid." The Athenians, irritated by opposition, invested, without delay, the capital of Melos, which was blocked up for several months by sea and land. The besieged, after suffering cruelly by famine, made several desperate sallies, seized the Athenian magazines, and destroyed part of their works. But towards the end of winter, their resistance was defeated by the vigorous efforts of the enemy, combined with domestic treason. The males above the age of fourteen shared the unhappy fate of the Scioneans. The women and children were subjected to perpetual servitude, and five hundred new inhabitants, drawn from the neighbouring colonies of Athens, were sent to occupy the vacant lands, which had been cultivated and adorned for seven centuries by the labour of the exterminated Melians²⁷.

²⁷ Thucyd. l. v. p. 410. ad fin.

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Alcibiades promotes the Sicilian Expedition.—Revolutions in that Island.—Embassy to Athens.—Extravagant Views of Alcibiades.—Opposed by Nicias.—The Athenians prepare to invade Sicily.—Their Armament beheld with Suspicion by the Italian States.—Deliberations concerning the Mode of carrying on the War.—Alcibiades takes Catana by Stratagem.—His Intrigues in Messenê.—He is unseasonably recalled to Athens.—Charged with Treason and Impiety.—Escapes to Sparta.—Nicias determines to attack Syracuse.—Description of that City.—The Athenians prevail in a Battle.—Return to Catana and Naxos.

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Alcibiades promotes the expedition into Sicily.

THE inhuman massacre of the Melians has been ascribed by an instructive, though often inaccurate biographer¹, to the unfeeling pride of Alcibiades. But more ancient and authentic writers², whose silence seems to exculpate the son of Clinias from this atrocious accusation, represent him as the principal author of the expedition against Sicily; an expedition not more unjust in its principle than fatal in its consequences.

Revolutions in that island. A. C. 479 —468.

The salutary union between the princes of Syracuse and Agrigentum triumphed, as we had occa-

¹ Plut. in Alcib.

² Thucyd. l. v. Lyfias Orat. cont. Alcib.

sion to relate, over the ambition and resources of Carthage. Sicily flourished under the virtuous administration of Gelon³ and Theron; but its tranquillity was disturbed by the dissensions of their immediate successors. Hieron king of Syracuse proved victorious in a long and bloody war, during which the incapacity and misfortunes of his rival Thrasideus emboldened the resentment of his subjects, already provoked by his injustice and cruelty⁴. He escaped the popular fury, but fell a victim to his own despair; and the Agrigentines, having expelled the family of an odious tyrant, instituted a republican form of policy.

The false, cruel, and avaricious Hieron (for such at least he is described⁵ in the first years of his reign) probably received little benefit from the dangerous influence of prosperity. But his mind was not incapable of reflection; and, in the course of a long sickness and confinement, he discovered the emptiness of such objects as kings are taught to admire, and had recourse to the solid pleasures of the mind. By conversing with Grecian philosophers, he learned the most important of all lessons, that of conversing with himself; a conversation which none but the most virtuous or the most vicious of men can long and frequently maintain, without deriving from it essential profit. With the improvement of his understanding, the sentiments of Hieron improved; his character and manners underwent a total change; and the latter

Reign of
Hieron in
Syracuse.

³ See above, p. 36.

⁴ Diodor. l. xi. c. lx. & seqq.

⁵ Diodor. Sic. l. xi. c. lxvi.

C H A P. years of his reign adorn the history of Sicily, and
 XIX. the age in which he lived⁶. The poets Simonides, Æschylus, and Bacchilides, frequented his court, and admired the greatness of his mind, rather than of his fortune. The sublime genius of Pindar has celebrated the magnificent generosity of his illustrious patron. And in an age when writing was the picture of conversation, because men talked as they needed not have been ashamed to write, the impartial disciple of Socrates, who had nothing to hope or to fear from the ashes of a king of Sicily, has represented Hieron, in the Dialogue entitled from his name⁷, as a model of wisdom and virtue,

The tyranny of Thrasylus, and establishment of democracy. Olymp. lxxviii. 3. A.C. 466.

It is a mortifying reflection that the inimitable qualities of a virtuous prince should naturally encourage the sloth, or irritate the vices, of a degenerate successor. The glorious reign of Hieron was followed by the bloody tyranny of Thrasylus; a wretch who, disgracing the throne and human nature, was expelled from Sicily by the just indignation of his subjects. Resentment is more permanent than gratitude. The Syracusans forgot the fame of Gelon; they forgot the recent merit of Hieron; and, that they might never be again subjected to a tyrant like Thrasylus, exchanged the odious power of kings for the dangerous fury of democracy⁸.

Effects of that revolution.

The inferior cities having successively imitated the example of Agrigentum and Syracuse, the

⁶ Ælian. l. ix. c. vii.

⁷ Xenophont. Hieron.

⁸ Aristot. de Repub. l. v. c. xii.

Grecian colonies in Sicily experienced the disorders of that tumultuous liberty which had so long prevailed in the mother-country. Distracted by internal discord, and harassed by external hostility, they had neither leisure nor inclination to attend to the politics of Greece. The republic of Syracuse, which was alone capable of interposing, with effect, in the quarrels of that country, imitated, instead of opposing, the ambition of Athens. Most of the Dorian settlements had become confederates, or rather tributaries, to the Syracusans; and towards the commencement of the Peloponnesian war, that aspiring people, though torn by domestic factions, strenuously exerted their valour against the Ionic settlements of Leontium, Catana, and Naxos.

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While these unhappy islanders struggled with the turbulence of a government more stormy than the whirlpools of Scylla and Charybdis, they likewise enjoyed, however, the peculiar advantages of democracy; which, of all political constitutions, presents the widest scope to the exercise of superior talents, and has always been the most productive in great men. The active fermentation of popular assemblies had given the eloquence of a Gorgias to Leontium, and the abilities of a Hermocrates to Syracuse. In the sixth year of the Peloponnesian war, the former came to Athens to solicit the protection of that republic against the unjust usurpation of the Sicilian capital. His arguments convinced the judgment, and the brilliant harmony of his style transported the sensibility, of the Athenians.

Diffensions
in Sicily,
in which
the Athe-
nians in-
terfere.
Olymp.
lxxxviii. 3.
A. C. 426.

C H A P. They immediately dispatched twenty ships of war
XIX. to the assistance of their Ionic brethren. Two years
 afterwards a similar request was made, and as readily complied with; and the Athenians seemed disposed to engage with vigour in the war, when the foresight of Hermocrates, alarmed by the intrusion of these ambitious strangers, promoted a general congress of the states of Sicily.

Appeased
 by Hermo-
 crates.
 Olymp.
 lxxxix. 1.
 A. C. 424.

This convention was held at the central town of Gela; it was attended by the plenipotentiaries of all the Doric and Ionic cities. Hermocrates represented Syracuse; and illustrious as that republic was, his conduct proved him worthy its highest honours. While the representatives of other states dwelt on their particular grievances, and urged their separate interests, Hermocrates regarded and enforced only the general interest of Sicily. His arguments finally prevailed, and all parties were engaged to terminate their domestic contests, lest the whole island should fall a prey to a foreign power⁹.

New dis-
 sensions.
 Olymp.
 xci. 1.
 A. C. 416.

But a plan of union, so seasonable and salutary, depended on the transient influence of a single man, while the principles of discord were innumerable and permanent. Within a few years after this event, Leontium was taken and destroyed, its inhabitants reduced to the wretched condition of exiles, and its confederates, the Egestæans, closely besieged by the conjunct arms of Selinus and Syracuse. The unfortunate communities again sent an embassy to Athens, pleading the rights of

Demands
 of the
 Egestæans;

⁹ Thucyd. p. 290.

consanguinity, and addressing not only the passions but the interest of their powerful allies. “The Athenians,” they insisted, “were bound by every principle of sound policy to repress the growing greatness of Syracuse, which must otherwise become a formidable accession to the Peloponnesian league; and now was the time for undertaking that enterprise, while their Ionian kinsmen in Sicily were still capable of exerting some vigour in their own defence.” In order to enforce these arguments, the ambassadors of Egesta or Segesta gave an ostentatious, and even a very false, description of the wealth of their republic; which, according to their account, was capable of furnishing the whole expence of the war. Their fellow-citizens at home carried on the deception by a most unjustifiable artifice, displaying to the Athenian commissioners sent to confer with them, the borrowed riches of their neighbours, and raising, by extraordinary expedients, the sum of sixty talents of silver, to maintain, for a month, an Athenian fleet of sixty sail, as if they had purposed monthly to repeat this large subsidy, which at once exhausted their faculties¹⁰.

The arguments of their Sicilian allies were doubtless entitled to considerable weight with the Athenians; yet various reasons might have dissuaded that ambitious people from undertaking, at the present juncture, an expedition against the powerful republic of Syracuse. The cloud of war, which Pericles saw advancing with rapid motion from the

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with which
the Athe-
nians im-
prudently
comply.

¹⁰ Thucyd. p. 444.

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Peloponnesus, had been at length dispelled by the valour and fortune of the Athenians; not, however, before the arms of Brasidas had shaken their empire to the foundation. The same storm might be again collected, if the Athenians removed their armies from home, especially if they were unfortunate abroad, since the wounded pride of Sparta would eagerly seize the first opportunity of revenge. The rebellion of the Macedonian cities was still unsubdued, and it would be highly imprudent and dangerous, before recovering the allegiance of these ancient possessions, to attempt the acquisition of new territories. Should the Athenian expedition against Sicily be crowned with the most flattering success, it would still be difficult, nay, impossible, to preserve such a distant and extensive conquest; but should this ambitious design fail in the execution, as there was too good reason to apprehend, the misfortunes of the Athenians, whose greatness was the object both of terror and of envy, would encourage the rebellious spirit of their subjects and allies, excite the latent animosity of the Peloponnesians, and reinforce their ancient enemies by the resentment and hostility of Syracuse and her confederates, justly provoked by the daring invasion of their island.

Extra-
gant views
of Alcibi-
ades.

These prudential considerations were unable to cool the ardour of the Athenian assembly, inflamed by the breath of their favourite Alcibiades. It is a just and profound observation of Machiavel, that the real powers of government are often contracted to a narrower point in republics than in monarchies;

narchies; an observation which that sagacious statesman had learned from the experience of his native city, and which he might have confirmed by the history of the Greeks, whose political measures, and even whose national character, depended on the transient influence of a few individuals. Under the direction of Aristides and Themistocles, the Athenians displayed the soundest policy, adorned by unshaken probity, and by heroic valour. Cimon inspired the generous ambition which animated his own breast: a dignified grandeur and magnanimous firmness distinguished the long administration, I had almost said reign, of Pericles. The son of Clinias succeeded to the power and authority, without succeeding to the virtues of those great men, whom his pride disdained to imitate. Regardless of order and decency, with a licentious magnificence most offensive to the spirit of republican equality, he blended a certain elegance of manners, which not only repelled censure, but attracted applause. Thus dispensed from observing the established formalities of private life, he expected that the glory of his administration might soar above the ordinary dictates of political prudence¹¹. Though he preferred what was useful to what was virtuous, he preferred what was brilliant to what was useful, and, disdaining the common gifts of valour and fortune, aspired at objects extraordinary and unattainable. The recovery of the Athenian possessions, and the re-establishment of an empire, al-

¹¹ See Plut. in Alcibiad. Isocrat. de Pace; above all, the animated picture in Plato's Republic (l. viii. cap. cc. & seqq.), of which Alcibiades, doubtless, was the original.

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ready too extensive, might have satisfied the ambition of a bold and active statesman. But the extravagant hopes of Alcibiades expatiated in a wider field. The acquisition of Sicily itself he regarded only as a necessary introduction to farther and more important conquests. The intermediate situation of that beautiful and fertile island opened, on the one hand, an easy communication with the eastern front of Italy, which, from Brundisium to the Sicilian frith, was adorned by populous and flourishing cities; and on the other, afforded a short and safe passage to the northern shores of Africa, which, for many ages, had been cultivated and enriched by the united labours of the Greeks and Carthaginians. In his waking or sleeping dreams, Alcibiades grasped the wide extent of those distant possessions, by the resources of which he expected finally to subdue the pertinacious spirit, and obstinate resistance, of the Peloponnesians. Thus secure at home, and sovereign of the sea, Athens might incorporate with her own the troops of the conquered provinces, and maintain an unshaken dominion over the most delightful portion of the earth, while her fortunate citizens, delivered from all laborious and mercenary cares, would be supported by the contributions of subject nations, and enabled to display, in their full extent, that taste for splendour and magnificence, that greatness of soul and superiority of genius, which justly entitled them to the empire of the world¹².

¹² Isocrat. de Pace. Andocid. Orat. iii, p. 269. & Aristoph. Vesp. ver. 656.

Allured

Allured by these extravagant, but flattering prospects of grandeur, the Athenians, in two successive assemblies, held at the short interval of five days, agreed to the resolution of making war against Sicily, and of raising such naval and military force as seemed necessary for carrying it on with vigour and success. While they still deliberated on the latter object, the virtuous Nicias, who had been named with Alcibiades and Lamachus to the command of the projected armament, omitted nothing that prudence could suggest, and patriotism enforce, to deter his countrymen from such a dangerous and fatal design. On this memorable occasion, he threw aside his usual timidity, and divested himself of that rigid regard for established forms, which was natural to his age and character. Though the assembly was convened to determine the proportion of supplies and troops, and the means of collecting them with the greatest expedition and facility, he ventured, contrary to ancient custom, to propose a different subject of debate; affirming, “That the interest of Athens was concerned, not in providing the preparations for the Sicilian invasion, but in re-examining the expediency of the war. The assembly ought not to be moved by the arguments and intreaties of the persecuted Egistæans, and fugitive Leontines, whom resentment had taught to exaggerate, and misery to deceive. Nor ought the vain phantom of glory and ambition to engage Athens in a design perhaps altogether impracticable, and, in the present juncture, peculiarly unseasonable; since it would be

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The Sicilian expedition opposed by Nicias.

Olymp.
xci. 2.
A.C. 415.

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madness to excite the flames of a new war, before the ashes of the old were extinguished. The pleas of danger and self-defence were in the highest degree frivolous; for, should the dreaded power of Syracuse be extended over the whole of Sicily, the Athenians would have nothing to apprehend: this event would rather increase their security. In the actual state of the island, particular cities might be persuaded by fear, or interest, to court the protection of the Peloponnesian confederacy; but the victorious Syracuse would disdain to follow the standard of Sparta. Should the former republic, by an effort of uncommon generosity, subject the partial dictates of her pride to the general safety and honour of the Dorian name, sound policy, however, would still prevent her from endangering the precarious empire which she had obtained over her neighbours, by strengthening the confederacy of Peloponnesus, of which the avowed design was to give liberty and independence to the Grecian cities. Should all remote views of policy be disregarded, yet immediate fear would deter the Syracusans from provoking the resentment of Athens, the effects of which they had not as yet experienced, but which, being unknown, must appear the more formidable. It was evident, therefore, that the Sicilian expedition might be omitted without danger; but if this enterprise, which had been hastily resolved on, were injudiciously executed, or if any of those misfortunes should happen, which are but too frequent in war, the Athenians would be exposed not only to danger, but to disgrace and ruin.

ruin. The result of such an important deliberation ought not to be committed to the rash decision of youthful levity; which viewed the Sicilian war, as it did every other object, through the delusive medium of hope, vanity, and ambition; and, totally disregarding the expence and danger to be incurred by the republic, considered only the profits of military command, which might repair the wreck of exhausted fortunes, and supply a new fund for the indulgence of extravagant and licentious pleasures. He had in his eye a youth of that description, the principal author of the expedition, who was surrounded by a numerous band of adherents, determined to applaud his discourse and to promote his measures. It became the wisdom and dignity of the assembly to resist with firmness that juvenile conspiracy. In such a dangerous crisis, it was the duty of the president to dispense with ordinary forms, and to act, not merely as the instrument, but as the physician of a diseased republic. The question ought to be debated a second time; and the Athenians ought to rescind the decree against Sicily, which had passed without sufficient examination, in the absence of several aged and respectable counsellors¹³."

This discourse immediately called up Alcibiades, who, presuming on his credit with the assembly; acknowledged, "That he had aspired to the com-

His discourse answered by Alcibiades.

¹³ Thucyd. l. vi. p. 417, & seqq. The Sicilian expedition is uninterruptedly related through the remainder of the sixth and seventh books of Thucydides. The collateral authority of Diodorus, Plutarch, and the orators, is of little importance.

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mand in Sicily, and that he thought himself justly intitled to that honour. The extravagance of which he was accused, had redounded to the profit of his country; since his magnificence at the Olympic games, however it might be traduced by an abusive epithet, had extended the glory of Athens, and deserved the admiration of Greece. His youth and inexperience had effected what the policy of the wisest statesmen had often attempted in vain. A powerful confederacy had been formed against Sparta, even in the bosom of the Peloponnesus; and the terror of a domestic foe would long prevent the enmity of that rival state from interrupting the progress of Athenian grandeur. In an expedition, evidently directed to this glorious end, expence and danger ought not to be regarded, since wealth was usefully sacrificed to purchase victory and renown; and power was only to be preserved by seizing every favourable opportunity to increase it. To the undertaking which he advised, no reasonable objection could be made; its expence would be furnished by the Egistæans, and other confederates; and the danger could not be great, as Sicily, however extensive and populous, was inhabited by a promiscuous crowd of various nations, without arms or discipline, devoid of patriotism, and incapable of union¹⁴.

Nicias explains the difficulties of the war.

The assembly murmured applause, confirmed their former decree, and testified for the war greater alacrity than before. Nicias perceived the violence

¹⁴ Thucyd. p. 422—426.

of the popular current; still, however, he made one ineffectual effort to resist its force. “The success of an invader,” he observed, “commonly depended on the weight and rapidity of his first unexpected impression, which confirmed the confidence of his friends, and excited dismay and terror in his enemies. If the expedition into Sicily must be undertaken in defiance of every difficulty and danger, it ought therefore to be carried into execution with the utmost vigour. The Athenians might thus secure the assistance of Naxos and Catana, which were connected by affinity with the Egistæans and Leontines. But there remained seven cities, and those far more powerful, with which they must prepare to contend; particularly Selinus and Syracuse, places well provided with ships, magazines, cavalry, archers, heavy-armed troops, and every object and resource most useful in defensive war. An armament simply naval would not be sufficient to cope with such a strength. Five thousand pikemen, with a proportional number of archers and cavalry, could not render the invasion successful. After arriving in Sicily, the towns must be besieged or stormed; workmen, with all sorts of machines and implements, must be collected for those purposes, and transported to an island from which, in the four winter months, a messenger could scarcely return to Athens. This necessary train, which would greatly encumber the fleet and army, must be subsisted in a hostile country. Besides an hundred gallies, a great number of tenders and victuallers would be required for the

CHAP. XIX. the expedition. To collect such an immense mass of war, demanded, doubtless, astonishing ardour and perseverance; but if the Athenians intended to employ a smaller force, he must, in justice to his country and himself, decline accepting the command, since nothing less than what he had described could promise a hope of victory, or prevent the certainty of defeat¹⁵."

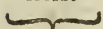
The Athenians prepare for invading Sicily. Olymp. xci. 2. A.C. 415.

The last attempt of Nicias to dissuade his countrymen from this fatal enterprise, by magnifying the difficulty of its execution, produced an opposite effect. The obstacles, which were unable to conquer, only animated the courage of the assembly; and it was determined, that the generals should be invested with full authority to raise such sums of money, and to levy such a body of troops, as might ensure success to their arms. The domestic strength of the Athenians was unequal to the greatness of the undertaking: proper agents were dispatched to demand an extraordinary contribution from their dependent states, as well as to summon the reluctant assistance of their more warlike allies. These auxiliary squadrons were ordered to sail to Corcyra, in which rendezvous the Athenians, towards the middle of summer, were ready to join their confederates.

The magnitude of their preparations.

The magnitude of the preparations increased the hopes and the ardour of all ranks of men in the republic. The old expected that nothing could resist such a numerous and well-equipped armament.

¹⁵ Thucyd. p. 427—429.



The young eagerly seized an occasion to gratify their curiosity and love of knowledge in a distant navigation, and to share the honours of such a glorious enterprize. The rich exulted in displaying their magnificence; the poor rejoiced in the immediate assurance of pay sufficient to relieve their present wants¹⁶, and in the prospect of obtaining by their arms the materials of future ease and happiness. Instead of finding any difficulty to complete the levies, the great difficulty consisted in deciding the preference of valour and merit among those who solicited to serve; and the whole complement of forces, to be employed by sea and land, consisted of chosen men¹⁷.

The general alacrity to embark.

Amidst the general alacrity felt, or at least expressed, by people of all descriptions (for the dread of incurring public censure made several express what they did not feel), Socrates¹⁸ alone ventured openly and boldly to condemn the expedition, and to predict the future calamities of his country. But the authority of a sage was incapable to check the course of that enthusiasm, which had not been interrupted by the anniversary

¹⁶ The most expert and able seamen received a drachma (seven pence three farthings) as daily pay, besides donatives from their respective captains. Thucyd. & Plut.

¹⁷ Thucyd. p. 430—433.

¹⁸ Plutarch joins Meton the astrologer with Socrates. But the story of Meton, who pretended madness, burned his house, and entreated the Athenians, that, amidst his domestic misfortunes, he might not be deprived of the comfort of his only son, is inconsistent with the narrative of Thucydides, which proves, that instead of compelling reluctance, there was occasion to repress forwardness, to embark.

festival

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which inauspiciously returned a few days preceding the embarkation. During this dreary ceremony, the streets of Athens were crowded with spectres clothed in funereal robes; the spacious domes and temples resounded with lugubrious cries; while the Grecian matrons, marching in slow procession, tore their dishevelled hair, beat their naked bosoms, and lamented in mournful strains the untimely death of the lover, and beloved favourite, of Venus¹⁹.

The arma-
ment sails
from
Athens;

When the appointed day arrived, the whole inhabitants of Athens, whether citizens or strangers, assembled early in the Piræus, to admire the greatest spectacle ever beheld in a Grecian harbour. An hundred gallies were adorned with all the splendour of naval pomp: the troops destined to embark, vied with each other in the elegance of their dress and the brightness of their arms: the alacrity painted in every face, and the magnificence displayed with profusion in every part of the equipage, represented a triumphal show, rather than the stern image of war. But the solidity and greatness of the armament proved that it was intended for use, not for ostentation. Amidst this glare of external pageantry which accompanied the adventurous youth, their friends and kinsmen could not suppress a few parting tears, when they considered the length of the voyage, the dangers of the sea, and the uncertainty of beholding again the

¹⁹ Plut. in Nic. & Alcibiad.

dearest pledges of their affections. But these partial expressions of grief were speedily interrupted by the animating sounds of the trumpet, which issued at once from an hundred ships, and provoked sympathetic acclamations from the shore. The captains then offered solemn prayers to the gods, which were answered by corresponding vows from the spectators: the customary libations were poured out in goblets of gold and silver; and, after the triumphant Pæan had been sung in full chorus, the whole fleet at once set sail, and contended for the prize of naval skill and celerity, until they reached the lofty shores of Ægina, from whence they enjoyed a prosperous navigation to the rendezvous of their confederates at Corcyra²⁰.

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At Corcyra the commanders reviewed the strength of the armament, which consisted of an hundred and thirty-four ships of war, with a proportional number of transports and tenders. The heavy-armed troops, exceeding five thousand, were attended with a sufficient body of slingers and archers. The army, abundantly provided in every other article, was extremely deficient in horses, which amounted to no more than thirty. But, at a moderate computation, we may estimate the whole military and naval strength, including slaves and servants, at twenty thousand men.

is reviewed
at Cor-
cyra.

With this powerful host, had the Athenians at once surprised and assailed the unprepared security of Syracuse, the expedition, however adventurous

The Athenians sail along the coast of Italy.

²⁰ Thucyd. l. vi. p. 432, & seqq. Plut. in Nicia. Diodor. l. xiii. p. 332.

and

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and imprudent, might, perhaps, have been crowned with success. But the timid mariners of Greece would have trembled at the proposal of trusting such a numerous fleet on the broad expanse of the Ionian sea. They determined to cross the narrowest passage between Italy and Sicily, after coasting along the eastern shores of the former, until they reached the Strait of Messina. That this design might be executed with the greater safety, they dispatched three light vessels to examine the disposition of the Italian cities, and to solicit admission into their harbours. The greatest part of Magna Græcia had, indeed, been peopled by Dorians, naturally hostile to Athens. But from one Italian city the Athenians had reason to expect a very favourable reception. The effeminate Sybaris had been demolished, as related above²¹, by the warlike inhabitants of Crotona, about the time that the Athenians, growing more powerful than their neighbours, began to seize every opportunity to extend their colonies and their dominion. Governed by such principles, they could not long overlook the happy situation of Sybaris, near to which they early formed an establishment that assumed the name of Thurium, from a salubrious fountain of fresh water²²; and the colony was increased by a numerous supply of emigrants, who, under Athenian leaders, sailed from Greece thirteen years before the Peloponnesian war²³.

²¹ P. 53.

²² Ωνομασαν απο της κρηνης θεριας. Diodor. l. xii. p. 295.

²³ Suid. ad voc. Lysias.

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Are re-
garded
with sus-
picion by
the Italian
cities.

The armament at Corcyra, whatever jealousy its power might create in other cities, was entitled to the gratitude of Thurium; presuming on which, the commanders, without waiting the return of the advice-boats, ordered the fleet to proceed, in three divisions, to the Italian coast. But neither the ties of consanguinity, nor the duties acknowledged by colonies towards their parent state, could prevail on the suspicious Thuriens to open their gates, or even to furnish a market, to their Athenian ancestors. The towns of Tarentum and Locris prohibited them the use of their harbours, and refused to supply them with water; and they coasted the whole extent of the shore, from the promontory of Iapygium to that of Rhegium, before any one city would allow them to purchase the commodities for which they had immediate use. The magistrates of Rhegium granted this favour, but they granted nothing more; notwithstanding the earnest solicitations of Alcibiades and his colleagues, who exhorted them, as a colony of Eubœa, to assist their brethren of Leontium, whose republic the Athenians had determined to re-establish and to defend²⁴.

Rhegium
alone sup-
plies them
with a
market.

While the armament continued at Rhegium, they were informed by vessels which had been purposely dispatched from Corcyra, that the Egistæans, notwithstanding the boasted accounts lately given of their riches, possessed only thirty talents in their treasury. This disagreeable intelligence, together

They are
informed
of the ar-
tifice of
the Egis-
tæans.

²⁴ Thucyd. p. 443.

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They deliberate on the mode of carrying on the war.

with the disappointment of assistance from any Italian city, occasioned a council of war, to consider what measures ought to be pursued in the Sicilian expedition. It was the opinion of Nicias, “ that the Egistæans ought to be furnished with that proportion of ships only, the charges of which they were able to defray; and that the Athenian fleet having settled, either by arms or by persuasion, the quarrels between them and their neighbours, should return to their own harbours, after sailing along the coast of Sicily, and displaying to the inhabitants of that island both their inclination and their power to protect the weakness of their allies.”

Alcibiades declared, “ That it would be shameful and ignominious to dissolve such a powerful armament, without performing some exploit worthy the renown of the republic; that, by the prospect of immediate and effectual support, the inferior cities might easily be alienated from their reluctant confederacy with Selinus and Syracuse; after which, the war ought to be carried on with the utmost vigour against those republics, unless they re-established the Leontines in their territory, and gave complete satisfaction to the injured Egistæans.”

Judicious advice of Lamachus;

Lamachus not only approved the active counsels of Alcibiades, but proposed a measure still more enterprising. “ The Athenians ought not to waste time in unimportant objects. Instead of striking at the extremities, they ought to assault at once the heart and strength of the enemy. If they immediately attacked Syracuse, it would not only be the

the first, but the last city, which they would have occasion to besiege. Nor could the attempt fail, if undertaken without delay, before the Syracusans had time to recollect themselves, and to provide for their own defence; and while the Athenian troops, as yet undaunted by any check, enjoyed unbroken courage and blooming hopes.”

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This advice, which does equal honour to the spirit and good sense of Lamachus, was rejected by the timidity of Nicias, and probably by the vanity of Alcibiades. The latter perceived a flattering opportunity of exhausting all the resources of his eloquence and intrigue to get possession of the dependent cities, before he illustrated the glory of his arms in the siege of Syracuse. The fleet sailed from Rhegium to execute *his* plan, which was adopted by his colleagues, as forming the middle between the extremes of their respective opinions. A considerable detachment was sent to examine the preparations and the strength of Syracuse, and to proclaim liberty, and offer protection, to all the captives and strangers confined within its walls.

is rejected.

With another detachment Alcibiades sailed to Naxos, and persuaded the inhabitants to accept the alliance of Athens. The remainder of the armament proceeded to Catana, which refused to admit the ships into the harbour, or the troops into the city. But on the arrival of Alcibiades, the Cataneans allowed him to address the assembly, and propose his demands. The artful Athenian transported the populace, and even the magistrates

Alcibiades
takes Ca-
tana by
stratagem.

C H A P. XIX. themselves, by the charms of his eloquence; the citizens flocked from every quarter, to hear a discourse which was purposely protracted for several hours; the soldiers forsook their posts; and the enemy, who had prepared to avail themselves of this negligence, burst through the unguarded gates, and became masters of the city. Those of the Cataneans who were most attached to the interests of Syracuse, fortunately escaped death by the celerity of their flight. The rest accepted the proffered friendship of the Athenians. This success would probably have been followed by the surrender of Messen^é, which Alcibiades had filled with distrust and sedition. But when the plot was ripe for execution²⁵, the man who had contrived, and who alone could conduct it, was disqualified from serving his country. The arrival of the Salaminian galley recalled Alcibiades to Athens, that he might stand trial for his life.

His intrigues in Messen^é.

He is unseasonably recalled to Athens.

It would be improper to suspend the course of an interesting narrative, by describing the causes and circumstances of this unexpected event, if they were not immediately connected with the subsequent history of the Sicilian expedition, and with the future fortune of the Athenians, who, after engaging, by the advice of one man, in the most

²⁵ Thucydides says, "When Alcibiades knew he should be banished, he betrayed his accomplices to the party favourable to Syracuse, who immediately put their adversaries to death." Thucyd. p. 462. We shall see hereafter still more fatal consequences of his resentment against his country. But nothing can more strongly attest the turpitude of his character.

romantic schemes of conquest which the madness of ambition had ever dared to entertain, injudiciously arrested the activity of that man in the execution of such extraordinary designs, as could only be accomplished by the wonderful resources of his singular and eccentric genius. It happened, that on the night preceding the intended navigation to Sicily, all the statues of Mercury, which had been erected in the Athenian streets as the boundaries of different edifices and tenements, were thrown down, broken, and defaced. One only image of the god, of uncommon size and beauty, was saved from the general wreck; it was afterwards called the statue of Andocides, as it stood before the house of the Athenian orator of that name. This daring insult was first ascribed to the wicked artifices of the Corinthians, who, it was supposed, might employ such an abominable and sacrilegious contrivance, to deter the Athenian armament from sailing against their colony and kinsmen of Syracuse. But the enemies of Alcibiades availed themselves of the impious levity²⁶ of his character, to direct the popular storm against the head of their detested foe. On the evidence of slaves, he was

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The cause
of his re-
cal.

²⁶ Democritus, the chief promoter of the Atomic philosophy, was younger than Anaxagoras, and elder than Socrates. His scholars, Diagoras and Protagoras, propagated his wild system at Athens towards the commencement of the Peloponnesian war. Whether Alcibiades embraced the barren doctrines of that miserable sect, or adhered to the divine philosophy of his master Socrates, or, more probably, fluctuated between them, he must, in all cases alike, have been obnoxious to the suspicion of impiety. Comp. Strabo, l. lxxv. p. 703. Sext. Empiric. l. lix. 11. Laert. l. ii. in Democrit. Socrat. & Protag.

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accused of having treated, with rude familiarity, other adored images of the gods; and Theſſalus, the degenerate ſon of the magnanimous Cimon, impeached him of impiety towards the goddeſſes Ceres and Proſerpine, whoſe awful ceremonies he had polluted and profaned; aſſuming, though uninitiated, the name and robes of the high-prieſt, calling Polytion (in whoſe houſe this dreadful ſcene had been repreſented), the torch-bearer, Theodorus the herald, and his other licentious companions the ſacred brethren and holy miniſters of thoſe myſterious rites²⁷.

He is
charged
with im-
piety and
treafon.
Olymp.
xci. 2.
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Such an atrocious accuſation alarmed the terrors of the Athenians; one aſſembly was ſummoned after another; and the panic became the more general, when it was underſtood that, during the ſame night in which the ſtatues had been mutilated, a body of Peloponneſian troops had marched towards the Iſthmus of Corinth. In the conſuſed imagination of the vulgar, it was poſſible to unite the incompatible intereſts of ſuperſtition and of freedom; and they were perſuaded by Androcles, and other artful demagogues, that the profanation of the myſteries, the defacing of the ſtatues of Mercury, the movement of the Peloponneſian troops, all announced a conſpiracy to demolish the eſtabliſhed form of popular government, the ſafety of which had, ever ſince the expulſion of the Piſiſtratidæ, formed an object of univerſal and moſt anxious ſolicitude.

²⁷ Plutarch. in Alcibiad.

Alcibiades defended himself, with his usual eloquence and address, against the malignity of a charge, unsupported by any adequate evidence. The soldiers and sailors, whose eagerness already grasped the conquest of Sicily, interceded for the deliverance of their commander, whom they regarded as the soul of that glorious enterprise. A thousand Argives and Mantineans, who had enlisted, on this occasion, under the Athenian banners, declared their unwillingness to sail, unless they were accompanied by Alcibiades, whose valour and abilities alone had determined them to engage in such an important, but dangerous service. This powerful combination in his favour disappointed the present hopes, without disconcerting the future measures, of his enemies. They perceived that, were he brought to an immediate trial, it would be impossible to obtain sentence against him; but that were his person and influence removed to a distance from Athens, every thing might be hoped from the weakness, inconsistency, and credulity of the populace. It was therefore determined by this perfidious cabal, that such orators as had hitherto disguised, under the mask of friendship or admiration, their envy and hatred of Alcibiades, should declare in full assembly, “ that it would be inconsistent with the clearest dictates of prudence and propriety, to involve in the tedious formalities of a judicial procedure, a citizen who had been elected general by the unanimous suffrage of his country, and whose presence was eagerly demanded by the affectionate ardour

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The artifices of his accusers.

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of his troops. The charges against him deserved, doubtless, to be seriously examined; but the present was not a proper time for such an investigation, which must blunt the courage of his followers, and interrupt the service of the republic. Let him fail, therefore, for Sicily, and at his return home he will either vindicate his innocence, or suffer the punishment of his guilt." Alcibiades perceived the poison concealed under this affected lenity, and testified his reluctance to leave behind him such abundant materials for the malice of informers. But his petition for an immediate trial was rejected by the assembly. He therefore set sail, probably flattering himself, that by the glory and success of his arms, he would silence the clamours, and defeat the machinations, of his accusers.

Favoured
by popular
delusion.

But this expectation was unfortunately disappointed. In a republican government, it is not more easy to excite, than it is difficult to appease, the fermentation of public discontents, especially if occasioned by any real or pretended diminution of freedom. The removal of Alcibiades gave full scope to the ebullitions of popular frenzy. The Athenians were continually assembled to enquire into the violation of the statues. Many respectable citizens were seized on suspicion, because they had, on former occasions, discovered principles hostile to the wild extravagance of democracy. Others were imprisoned on the evidence of Teucer, an obscure stranger, and Diopceithes, a calumnious demagogue. The violence of the public disorder opened a door to private vengeance. Every individual

vidual was desirous to see his personal enemies among the number of state criminals; and his resentment was invited falsely to accuse them, by an injudicious decree of the assembly, offering high rewards to those who should denounce the guilty, and even to the guilty themselves, who should denounce their associates.

Among the persons who had been seized on suspicion, was the crafty and intriguing Timæus, and the profligate and impious Andocides, the same whose statue of Mercury had escaped the general mutilation. The known character of these men naturally marked them out as peculiar victims of popular fury. As they were confined in the same prison, they had an opportunity of communicating their apprehensions, and of contriving means of safety. Timæus persuaded his friend (for the ties of common danger create between knaves a temporary friendship), that it would be weakness to die by a false accusation, when he might save himself by a lie. Andocides turned informer. The prisoners whom he named were banished or put to death; the rest were set at liberty. The absent, among whom was Alcibiades, were recalled to stand trial. But they did not obey the summons sent them by the Salaminian galley. The wanderings and misfortunes of more obscure names are unknown. Alcibiades escaped to Thurium, and afterwards to Argos; and when he understood that the Athenians had set a price on his head, he finally took refuge in Sparta; where his active genius seized the

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Alcibiades
escapes to
Sparta.
Olymp.
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the first opportunity to advise and to promote those fatal measures, which, while they gratified his private resentment, occasioned the ruin of his country²⁸.

Languid
operations
in Sicily.

The removal of Alcibiades soon appeared in the languid operations of the Athenian armament. The cautious timidity of Nicias, supported by wealth, eloquence, and authority, gained an absolute ascendant over the more warlike and enterprising character of Lamachus, whose poverty exposed him to contempt. Instead of making a bold impression on Selinus or Syracuse, Nicias contented himself with taking possession of the inconsiderable colony of Hyccara. He ravaged, or laid under contribution, some places of smaller note, and obtained thirty talents from the Egistæans, which, added to the sale of the booty, furnished about thirty thousand pounds sterling²⁹, a sum that might be usefully employed in the prosecution of an expensive war. But this advantage did not compensate for the courage inspired into the Syracusans by delay, and for the dishonour sustained by the Athenian troops, in their unsuccessful attempts against Hybla and Himera, as well as for their dejection at being confined, during the greatest part

²⁸ Plut. in Alcibiad. & Isocrates, and Lyfias, in the Orations for and against the son of Alcibiades. Several facts and circumstances are differently represented in the orations of Andocides; but that orator was a party concerned.

²⁹ Thirty talents from the Egistæans, amount to	£ 5,812
The sale of slaves, &c.	23,259

Sum	£ 29,062
	of

of the summer, in the inactive quarters of Naxos and Catana.

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The impatience of the Athenians murmured against these dilatory and ignoble proceedings, which appeared altogether unworthy the greatness of their armament, the generous spirit with which they felt themselves animated, and the ancient glory of the republic. Nicias, resisting the wary dictates of his own fear or foresight, determined to gratify the inclination of his troops by the vigour of his winter campaign. The conquest of Syracuse, against which he intended to lead them, might well excite the emulation of the combatants, since that powerful city formed the main obstacle to their ambition, and the principal bulwark not only of Sicily, but of the Italian and African shores.

Nicias determines to attack Syracuse.

Ancient Syracuse, of which the ruined grandeur still forms an object of admiration, was situate on a spacious promontory, washed on three sides by the sea, and defended on the west by abrupt and almost inaccessible mountains. The town was built in a triangular form, whose summit may be conceived at the lofty mountains Epipolé. Adjacent to these natural fortifications, the western or inland division of the city was distinguished by the name of Tycha, or Fortune, being adorned by a magnificent temple of that flattering divinity. The triangle gradually widening towards the base, comprehended the vast extent of Achradina, reaching from the northern shore of the promontory to the southern island Ortygia. This small island, composing the whole of modern Syracuse, formed but the
third

Description of that city.

CHAP. third and least extensive division of the ancient;
 XIX. which was fortified by walls eighteen miles in circuit, enriched by a triple harbour, and peopled by above two hundred thousand warlike citizens or industrious slaves³⁰.

Temper of
 the Syra-
 cufans.

When the Syracufans heard the first rumours of the Athenian invasion, they despised, or affected to despise them, as idle lies invented to amuse the ignorance of the populace. The hostile armament had arrived at Rhegium before they could be persuaded, by the wisdom of Hermocrates, to provide against a danger which their presumption painted as imaginary. But when they received undoubted intelligence that the enemy had reached the Italian coast; when they beheld their numerous fleet commanding the sea of Sicily, and ready to make a descent on their defenceless island, they were seized with a degree of just terror and alarm proportional to their false security. They condemned their former incredulity and indifference, which had been nourished by the interested adulation of the demagogue Athenagoras, who vainly assured them that the strength of Syracuse was sufficient not only to defy the assaults, but to deter the attempts, of any Grecian foe. From the heights of presumption they plunged into the depths of despair, and their spirits were, with difficulty, restored by the animating voice of Hermocrates, who was not more prudent in prosperity than intrepid in danger³¹.

³⁰ Strabo, p. 266, & seqq. & Thucyd. passim. l. vi.

³¹ Thucyd. p. 436, & seqq.

They in-
sult the
Atheni-
ans.

By *his* exhortations they were encouraged to make ready their arms, to equip their fleet, to strengthen their garrisons, and to summon the assistance of their allies. These measures were undertaken with ardour, and carried on with unremitting activity; and the dilatory operations of the enemy not only removed the recent terror and trepidation of the Syracusans, but inspired them with unusual firmness. They requested the generals, whom they had appointed to the number of fifteen, to lead them to Catana, that they might attack the hostile camp. Their cavalry harassed the Athenians by frequent incursions, beat up their quarters, intercepted their convoys, destroyed their advanced posts, and even proceeded so near to the main body, that they were distinctly heard demanding, with loud insults, Whether those boasted lords of Greece had left their native country, that they might form a precarious settlement at the foot of Mount Ætna³².

Provoked by these indignities, and excited by the impatient resentment of his own troops, Nicias was still restrained from an open attempt against Syracuse by the difficulties attending that enterprise. The distance between Catana and the Sicilian capital was more than thirty miles; but, after the most prosperous voyage, the Athenians could not expect, without extreme danger, to make a

Stratagem
of Nicias
for getting
possession
of Syra-
cuse.

³² Plutarch. The sneer is differently expressed in Thucydides:
“Whether they had not come to gain a settlement for themselves in a foreign country, rather than to replace the Leontines in *their own*.”
Thucyd. p. 455.

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descent on the fortified coast of a powerful and vigilant enemy. If they determined to march by land, they must be harassed by the numerous cavalry of Syracuse, which actually watched their motions, and with whose activity, in a broken and intricate country, the strength of heavy-armed troops was exceedingly ill qualified to contend. To avoid both inconveniencies, Nicias employed a stratagem. A citizen of Catana, whose subtle and daring genius, prepared alike to die or to deceive, ought to have preserved his name from oblivion, appeared in Syracuse as a deserter from his native city; the unhappy fate of which, in being subjected to the imperious commands, or licentious disorder of the Athenians, he lamented with perfidious tears, and with the plaintive accents of well-disssembled sorrow. “ *He* was not the only man who bewailed, with filial compassion, the misfortunes and ignominy of his country. A numerous band of Cataneans, whose resentment was repressed by fear, longed to take up arms, that they might deliver themselves from a disgraceful yoke, and repel the tyranny of the invaders. Nor could the design fail of success, if Syracuse should second their generous ardour. The Athenians, so liberally endowed with courage and ambition, were destitute of wisdom and of discipline. They spurned the confinement of the military life; their posts were forsaken, their ships unguarded; they disdained the duties of the camp, and indulged in the pleasures of the city. On an appointed day it would be easy for the Syracusans, assisted by the
conspi-

conspirators of Catana, to attack them unprepared, to mount their undefended ramparts, to demolish their encampment, and to burn their fleet."

This daring proposal well corresponded with the keen sentiments of revenge which animated the inhabitants of Syracuse. The day was named; the plan of the enterprise was concerted, and the treacherous Catanean returned home to revive the hopes, and to confirm the resolution, of his pretended associates.

The success of this intrigue gave the utmost satisfaction to Nicias, whose armament prepared to sail for Syracuse on the day appointed by the inhabitants of that city for assaulting, with their whole force, the Athenian camp. Already had they marched, with this view, to the fertile plain of Leontium, when, after twelve hours sail, the Athenian fleet arrived in the great harbour, disembarked their troops, and fortified a camp without the western wall, near to a celebrated temple of Olympian Jupiter; a situation which had been pointed out by some Syracusan exiles, and which was well adapted to every purpose of accommodation and defence. Meanwhile the cavalry of Syracuse, having proceeded to the walls of Catana, had discovered, to their infinite regret, the departure of the Athenians. The unwelcome intelligence was conveyed, with the utmost expedition, to the infantry, who immediately marched back to protect Syracuse. The rapid return of the warlike youth restored the courage of the aged Syracusans. They were joined by the forces of Gela, Selinus,

Fails
through
the acti-
vity of the
Syracu-
sans.

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Nicias de-
feats the
Syracu-
sans in a
battle.
Olymp.
xci. 2.
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Selinus, and Camarina; and it was determined, with-
out loss of time, to attack the hostile encampment³³.

Only a few days elapsed before the Athenians gave them a fairer opportunity of revenge. The two armies prepared to engage, respectively inflamed by resentment and ambition; the one formidable in courage and numbers, the other elated by superior discipline and habitual victory. The Syracusan generals drew up their troops, sixteen, and the Athenians only eight, deep: but the latter had, in their camp, a body of reserve, which was kept ready for action on the first signal. Nicias went round the ranks, exhorting his soldiers by a short discourse, in which he observed, “ that the strength of their present preparations was better fitted to inspire confidence, than the most eloquent speech with a weak army, especially as they contended against the Syracusans, a promiscuous crowd, whose presumption was founded on inexperience, and whose desultory ardour, however successful in predatory incursions, would yield to the first shock of regular war. They fought, indeed, in defence of their city; so did the Athenians and their allies, whom nothing but military valour and success would restore in safety to their respective countries³⁴.” Having thus spoken, he led his troops to the enemy, who did not decline the engagement. The light-armed archers³⁵ skirmished

³³ Thucyd. p. 445—457.

³⁴ Thucyd. p. 458 & 459.

³⁵ Thucydides mentions, besides the archers (τοξοται), the λιθοβόλοι, and σφενδανηται, “ the throwers of stones and slingers.” P. 449. They were all ψιλλοι, as he says immediately below.

in the van : the priests brought forth the accustomed sacrifices : the trumpets summoned for a general charge.

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The attack was begun with fury, and continued with perseverance for several hours. Both sides were animated by every principle that can inspire and urge the utmost vigour of exertion, and victory was still doubtful, when a tempest suddenly arose, accompanied with unusual peals of thunder. This event, which little affected the Athenians, confounded the unexperienced credulity of the enemy, who were broken and put to flight. Nicias restrained the eagerness of his men in the pursuit, lest they should be exposed to danger from a body of twelve hundred Syracusan cavalry, who had not engaged in the battle, but who impatiently watched an opportunity to assault the disordered phalanx. The Syracusans escaped to their city, and the Athenians returned to their camp. In such an obstinate conflict the vanquished lost two hundred and sixty, the victors only fifty men ; numbers that might occasion much surprise, if we reflected not that, to oppose the offensive weapons used by antiquity, the warriors of Greece (in every circumstance so unlike the miserable and naked peasants of modern Europe, whose lives are sacrificed without defence, as without remorse, to the ambition of men whom the Greeks would have styled tyrants) being armed with the helmet and cuirass, the ample buckler, the firm corselet, and the manly greaves, they often displayed their skill, their courage, and their love of liberty, at a very small expence of human blood.

Cause of
their de-
feat.

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XIX.

The Athenians return to Catana and Naxos.

The voyage, the encampment, and the battle, employed the dangerous activity, and gratified the impetuous ardour of the Athenians, but did not facilitate the conquest of Syracuse. Without more powerful preparations, Nicias despaired of taking the place, either by assault, or by a regular siege. Soon after his victory he returned with the whole armament to Naxos and Catana; a measure which sufficiently proves that the late enterprise had been undertaken, not in consequence of any permanent system of operations formed by the general, but in compliance with the ungovernable³⁶ temper of his troops, whose ideas of military subordination were confined to the field of battle.

³⁶ Without attending to this circumstance, the conduct of Grecian generals must, on many occasions, appear altogether unaccountable. The same observation applies to modern history preceding the peace of Munster. The famous war of thirty years, which ended in that peace, laid the foundation for the exact military subordination which distinguishes the present century. See Pere Bougeant, *Histoire de la Guerre de 30 Ans.*

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Preparations for the ensuing Campaign.—The Athenians begin the Siege with Vigour.—Distress and Sedition in Syracuse.—Arrival of Gylippus—Who defeats the Athenians.—Transactions in Greece.—A second Armament arrives at Syracuse—Its first Operations successful.—The Athenians defeated.—Prepare to raise the Siege.—Naval Engagement in the Great Harbour.—Despondency of the Athenians.—Stratagem of Hermocrates.—The Athenians raise their camp.—Melancholy Firmness of Nicias.—Demosthenes capitulates.—Nicias surrenders.—Cruel Treatment of the Athenian Captives.—Singular Exception.

NICIAS had reason to expect that his victory over the Syracusans would procure him respect and assistance from the inferior states of Sicily. His emissaries were diffused over that island and the neighbouring coast of Italy. Messengers were sent to Tuscany, where Pisa and other cities had been founded by Greek colonies¹. An embassy was dispatched to Carthage, the rival and enemy of Syracuse. Nicias gave orders to collect materials for circumvallation, iron, bricks, and all necessary stores. He demanded horses

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XX.

Nicias prepares for the ensuing campaign.
Olymp.
xci. 2.
A. C. 41

¹ Strabo, p. 243, & p. 283, & seqq.

CHAP. XX. from the Egestæans; and required from Athens reinforcements and a large pecuniary supply; and neglected nothing that might enable him to open the ensuing campaign with vigour and effect².

The Syracusans prepare for defence.

While the Athenians thus prepared for the attack of Syracuse, the citizens of that capital displayed equal activity in providing for their own defence. By the advice of Hermocrates, they appointed *himself*, Heraclides, and Sicanus; three, instead of fifteen generals. The commanders newly elected, both in civil and military affairs, were invested with unlimited power, which was usefully employed to purchase or prepare arms, daily to exercise the troops, and to strengthen and extend the fortifications of Syracuse. They likewise dispatched ambassadors to the numerous cities and republics with which they had been connected in peace, or allied in war, to solicit the continuance of their friendship, and to counteract the dangerous designs of the Athenians.

Both parties court the friendship of the Camerineans. Olymp. xci. 2. A.C. 415.

The importance of the city Camerina, situate on the southern coast of Sicily, demanded the presence of Hermocrates himself. The Camerineans had given a very feeble and reluctant assistance to their allies of Syracuse; and the orator Euphemus employed all the resources of his genius to unite

² It is remarkable that though Nicias, after the removal of Alcibiades, enjoyed the principal, or rather sole, command of the army, he acted quite contrary to the opinion which he had declared at the commencement of the expedition. The plan which he pursued was that of Alcibiades, not his own: the views of the banished general still actuated the army; but the ardent spirit was withdrawn, that could alone ensure their success.

them

them to the Athenian confederacy. An assembly being summoned, Hermocrates informed them, " That a desire to prevent the deception of the Camerineans, not the dread of the Athenian power, had occasioned his present journey. That restless and ambitious nation, which had so often kindled the flames of war on the continent of Greece, had lately sailed to Sicily, under pretence of re-establishing the affairs of the Leontines and Egestæans, but from a motive more selfish, which it was easy to conjecture, and impossible to mistake. Their real and only design was to sow dissension and disagreement among the Sicilian states, which, fighting singly, might be successively subdued. How could effrontery affirm, or simplicity believe, that the Athenians should undertake a voyage to vindicate the freedom of Egesta; they who oppressed, with all the rigours of slavery, the unhappy islanders of Eubœa, by whom Egesta had been built, and from whom its inhabitants were descended! Under pretence of delivering from the tyranny of the great king, the Greeks of Asia, of the Hellespont, of Thrace, and of the Ægean, they had conquered and enslaved those various countries. They actually employed the same perfidious contrivance against the safety of the Sicilians; but he trusted that their present undertaking, though carried on with equal artifice, would be attended with very different success; and that they would learn, by experience, to distinguish between the effeminate Ionians and Hellespontines, whose minds had been enfeebled and debased by the Persian yoke, and the magna-

CHAP.
XX.

Argu-
ments of
the Syra-
cusans.

CHAP. XX. nimous Dorians of Sicily, the genuine offspring of Peloponnesus, the source of valour and of liberty³.”

Of the Athenians.

Euphemus, the Athenian, repelled, with force and spirit, these reproachful accusations. “The colonies of Athens were kept in a dependence, not less advantageous to themselves than honourable to the parent state. The general interest of Greece required that the same republic which at first had so bravely established, should still continue to maintain, the national independence. They who yield protection, must assume authority; but this authority the Athenians had exerted in a manner essential to their own and to the public safety. If they had subjected the neighbouring coasts and islands, their *interest* might justify that odious but necessary measure; and the same dictates of sound policy which induced them to conquer and to enslave the Hellepontine and Asiatic Greeks, would engage them to emancipate and to deliver the oppressed Sicilians. To this office they were invited by the Leontines and Egestæans; to this duty they were prompted by the ties of friendship and consanguinity; to this enterprise they were determined by the strongest of all motives, a well-grounded fear lest the inhabitants of Sicily (whose numbers and distance rendered it impossible for Athens to subdue, far less to retain them in subjection) should fall a prey to the watchful encroachments of Syracuse, and thus become an accession to the Peloponnesian confederacy.” The Camerineans dreaded

³ Thucyd. l. vi. p. 463, & seqq.

the distant ambition of Athens, but dreaded still more the neighbouring hostility of Syracuse. Their fears dictated a reply in friendly and respectful terms; but they craved leave to preserve a neutrality between the contending powers, hoping, by this expedient, to irritate the resentment of neither, yet to defeat the designs of both.

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XX.

The Car-
merineans
determine
to observe
neutrality.

Meanwhile the expected reinforcements arrived from Athens. In addition to his original force, Nicias had likewise collected a body of six hundred cavalry, and the sum of four hundred talents; and, in the eighteenth summer of the war, the activity of the troops and workmen had completed all necessary preparations for undertaking the siege of Syracuse. The Athenian armament enjoyed a prosperous voyage to the northern harbour of Trogilé, and the troops were no sooner disembarked than they seized an opportunity of signalising their valour against a body of seven hundred men, who marched to reinforce the garrison of Labdalus; an important fortress, situate on the highest of the mountains which overlook and command the city. Three hundred Syracusans were killed in the pursuit; the rest took refuge behind their walls; and the castle of Labdalus was taken, and strongly guarded by the victors. The plan which Nicias adopted for conquering the city, was to draw a wall on either side from the neighbourhood of Labdalus, towards the port of Trogilé on the north, and towards the gulph, extending two leagues in circumference, and justly called the Great Harbour, on the south. When these circumvallations had

The Athe-
nians are
reinforced,
and begin
the siege
with vi-
gour.
Olymp.
xci. 3.
A. C. 414.

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surrounded the place by land, he expected, by his numerous fleet, to block up the wide extent of the Syracusan harbours. The whole strength of the Athenian armament was employed in the former operations; and, as all necessary materials had been provided with due attention, the works rose with a rapidity which surprised and terrified the besieged. Their former, as well as their recent defeat, deterred them from opposing the enemy in a general engagement; but the advice of Hermocrates persuaded them to raise walls, which might traverse and interrupt those of the Athenians⁴. The imminent danger urged the activity of the workmen; the hostile bulwarks approached each other; frequent skirmishes took place, in one of which the brave Lamachus unfortunately fell a victim to his rash valour⁵; but the Athenian troops maintained their usual superiority.

Distress
and sedi-
tion in
Syracuse.

Encouraged by success, Nicias pushed the enemy with vigour. The Syracusans lost hopes of defending their new works, or of preventing the complete circumvallation of their city; and this despair was increased by the abundant supplies which arrived from all quarters to the besiegers, while the interest of Syracuse seemed to be universally abandoned by the indifference or cowardice of her allies. In the turbulent democracies of Greece, the moment of public danger commonly gave the signal for domestic sedition. The populace clamoured, with their usual licentiousness, against the incapacity or perfidy of their leaders, to whom

⁴ Thucyd. l. vi. p. 482, & seqq.

⁵ Plutarch, in Nicia.

alone

alone they ascribed their misfortunes. New generals were named in the room of Hermocrates and his colleagues; and this injudicious alteration increased the calamities of Syracuse, which at length prepared to capitulate⁶.

While the assembly deliberated concerning the execution of a measure, which, however disgraceful, was declared to be necessary, a Corinthian galley, commanded by Gongylus, entered the central harbour of Ortygia, which being strongly fortified, and penetrating into the heart of the city, served as the principal and most secure station for the Syracusan fleet. The news immediately reached the assembly, and all ranks of men eagerly crowded around Gongylus the Corinthian, that they might learn the design of his voyage, and the intentions of their Peloponnesian allies. Gongylus announced a speedy and effectual relief to the besieged city⁷. He acquainted the Syracusans, that the embassy, sent the preceding year, to crave the assistance of Peloponnesus, had been crowned with success. His own countrymen had warmly embraced the cause of their kinsmen, and most respectable colony. They had fitted out a considerable fleet, the arrival of which might be expected every hour. The Lacedæmonians also had sent a small squadron, and the whole armament was conducted by the Spartan Gylippus, an officer of tried valour and ability.

The Syracusans unexpectedly relieved by their Peloponnesian allies.
Olymp.
xci. 3.
A. C. 414.

While the desponding citizens of Syracuse listened to this intelligence with pleasing astonish-

Arrival of the Spartan Gylippus;

⁶ Thucyd. p. 487.

⁷ Id. p. 490.

ment,

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XX.

ment, a messenger arrived by land from Gylippus himself. That experienced commander, instead of pursuing a direct course to Sicily, which might have been intercepted by the Athenian fleet, had landed with four galleys on the western coast of the island. The name of a Spartan general determined the wavering irresolution of the Sicilians. The troops of Himera, Selinus, and Gela, flocked to his standard; and he approached Syracuse on the side of Epipolé, where the line of contravallation was still unfinished, with a body of several thousand men.

who de-
feats the
Atheni-
ans.

The most courageous of the citizens sallied forth to meet this generous and powerful protector. The junction was happily effected; the ardour of the troops kindled into enthusiasm; and they distinguished that memorable day by surprising several important Athenian posts. This first success re-animated the activity of the soldiers and workmen. The traverse wall was extended with the utmost diligence, and a vigorous sally deprived the enemy of the strong castle of Labdalus. Nicias perceiving that the interest of the Athenians in Sicily would be continually weakened by delay, wished to bring the fortune of the war to the decision of a battle. Nor did Gylippus decline the engagement. The first action was unfavourable to the Syracusans, who had been imprudently posted in the defiles between their own and the enemy's walls, which rendered of no avail their superiority in cavalry and archers. The magnanimity of Gylippus acknowledged this error, for which he

com-

completely atoned by his judicious conduct in the succeeding engagements. His forces were drawn up in a more spacious ground. The pikemen received the shock of the enemy's front. The horses and light-armed troops assailed and harassed their undefended flanks. The Athenians were thrown into disorder, repulsed, and pursued to their camp with considerable loss, and with irreparable disgrace.

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The important consequences of this victory appeared in the subsequent events of the siege. The Syracusans soon extended their works beyond the line of circumvallation, so that it was impossible to block up their city, without forcing their ramparts. The besiegers, while they maintained the superiority of their arms, had been abundantly supplied with necessaries from the neighbouring territory; but every place was alike hostile to them after their defeat. The soldiers who went out in quest of wood and water, were unexpectedly attacked and cut off by the enemy's cavalry, or by the reinforcements which arrived from every quarter to the assistance of Syracuse; and they were at length reduced to depend, for every necessary supply, on the precarious bounty of the Italian shore.

Conse-
quences of
the victo-
ry.

Nicias, whose sensibility deeply felt the public distress, wrote a most desponding letter to the Athenians. He honestly described, and lamented, the misfortunes and disorders of his army. The slaves deserted in great numbers; the mercenary troops, who fought only for pay and subsistence, preferred

Nicias de-
mands a
reinforce-
ment from
Athens.

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the more secure and lucrative service of Syracuse; even the Athenian citizens, disgusted with the unexpected length and intolerable hardships of the war, abandoned the care of the galleys to unexperienced hands; an abuse too easily permitted by the captains, whose weakness and partiality had corrupted the discipline, and ruined the strength, of the fleet. Nicias frankly acknowledged his inability to check the disorder; observing, that he wrote to those who knew the difficulty of governing the licentious spirit of their domestic troops. He therefore exhorted the assembly, either to call them home without delay, or to send immediately a second armament, not less powerful than the first.

Naval operations.
Olymp.
xci. 4.
A.C. 413.

Gylippus and Hermocrates (for the latter had again assumed the authority due to his abilities) were acquainted with the actual distress, as well as the future hopes of the besiegers, who might derive, in consequence of Nicias's letter, more effectual succours from Attica than the besieged city could expect from Peloponnesus. They were prompted by interest therefore, as well as by inclination, to press the enemy on every side, and at once to assail them by sea and land. Besides the bad condition of the Athenian fleet, the absence of a considerable number of galleys employed in conducting the convoys of provisions, encouraged this resolution. The Corinthian squadron of twelve sail, long expected with anxiety, had escaped the dangers of a winter's voyage; and at the commencement of the ensuing spring, the harbours of Syracuse

Syracuse were crowded with the whole naval strength of Sicily. Hermocrates persuaded his countrymen, "That the advantages of skill and experience, which he honestly ascribed to the Athenians, could not compensate their terror and confusion at being suddenly attacked by a superior force, on an element which they affected to command. Athens had assumed this boasted empire of the sea in repelling the invasion of Persia. Syracuse had a similar, yet stronger motive; and as she possessed greater power, was entitled to expect more distinguished success."

The principal squadrons of Syracuse lay in the harbour of Ortygia, separated, by an island of the same name, from the station of the Athenian fleet. While Hermocrates sailed forth with eighty gallees, to venture a naval engagement, Gylippus attacked the hostile fortifications at Piemmyrium, a promontory opposite to Ortygia, which confined the entrance of the Great Harbour. The defeat of the Syracusans at sea, whereby they lost fourteen vessels, was balanced by their victory at land, in which they took three fortresses, containing a large quantity of military and naval stores, and a considerable sum of money. In some subsequent actions, which scarcely deserve the name of battles, their fleet was still unsuccessful; but as they engaged with great caution, and found every where a secure retreat on a friendly shore, their loss was extremely inconsiderable. The want of success, in their first attempt, did not abate their resolution to gain the command at sea. The hopes of defending their country

Alternate
success.

CHAP.
XX.

country sharpened their invention, and animated their activity. They could not, indeed, contend with the Athenians in the rapidity of naval evolution, or in the skill of seamanship; but in the destined scene of action, there was little opportunity for displaying those advantages; and by strengthening, with unremitting labour, the prows of their ships, they compensated, by superior weight, the defect of velocity. They provided also a great number of small vessels, which might approach so near the hostile fleet, that the light-armed troops with which they were filled could aim their darts against the Athenian mariners.

The Athenians defeated at sea.

By unexampled assiduity in completing these preparations, the Syracusans at length prevailed in a general engagement, which was fought in the Great Harbour. Seven Athenian ships were sunk, many more were disabled, and Nicias saved the remains of his shattered and dishonoured armament, by retiring behind a line of merchantmen and transports, from the masts of which had been suspended huge masses of lead, named dolphins from their form, sufficient to crush, by their falling weight, the stoutest galleys of antiquity. This unexpected obstacle arrested the progress of the victors; but the advantages already obtained elevated them with the highest hopes, and reduced the enemy to despair.

Transactions in Greece.
Olymp.
xci. 3.
A.C. 414.

The Athenian misfortunes in Sicily were attended by misfortunes at home, still more dreadful. In the eighteenth year of the war, Alcibiades accompanied to Sparta the ambassadors of Corinth and Syracuse,

Syracuse, who had solicited and obtained assistance to the besieged city. On that occasion, the Athenian exile first acquired the confidence of the Spartans, by condemning, in the strongest terms, the injustice and ambition of his ungrateful countrymen, “ whose cruelty towards himself equalled their inveterate hostility to the Lacedæmonian republic; but that republic might, by following his advice, disarm their resentment. The town of Decelia was situated on the Attic frontier, at an equal distance of fifteen miles from Thebes and Athens. This place, which commanded an extensive and fertile plain, might be surprised and fortified by the Spartans⁸, who, instead of harassing their foes by annual incursions, might thus infest them by a continual war. The wisdom of Sparta had too long neglected such a salutary and decisive measure, especially as the existence of a similar design had often been suggested by the fears of the enemy, who trembled even at the apprehension of seeing a foreign garrison in their territory.”

This advice, first proposed, and often urged, by Alcibiades, was adopted in the commencement of the ensuing spring, when the warlike Agis led a powerful army into Attica. The defenceless inhabitants of the frontier fled before his irresistible arms; but instead of pursuing them, as usual, into the heart of the country, he stopped short at Decelia. As all ne-

The Peloponnesians raise a fortress in Attica. Olymp. xci. 4. A. C. 413.

⁸ The Athenians, with their usual imprudence, facilitated the success of Alcibiades's intrigues. At the time they ought, if possible, to have soothed, they exasperated the Spartans to the utmost, by frequent incursions from Pylus, and by openly assisting the Argives. Thucyd. l. vi. sub fine.

CHAP.
XX.

The miserable state of that country.

cessary materials had been provided in great abundance, the place was speedily fortified on every side, and the walls of Decelia, which might be distinctly seen across the intermediate plain, bid defiance to those of Athens?

The latter city was kept in continual alarm by the watchful hostility of a neighbouring garrison. The open country was entirely laid waste, and the usual communication was interrupted with the valuable island of Eubœa, from which, in seasons of scarcity, or during the ravages of war, the Athenians commonly derived their supplies of corn, wine, and oil, and whatever is most necessary to life. Harassed by the fatigues of unremitting service, and deprived of daily bread, the slaves murmured, complained, and revolted to the enemy; and their defection robbed the state of twenty thousand useful artificers. Since the latter years of Pericles, the Athenians had not been involved in such distress. But their present were far more grievous than their past sufferings. These had been chiefly occasioned by the temporary rage of the pestilence, the abatement of which there was always reason to expect; but those were inflicted by the unextinguishable hatred of a cruel and unrelenting foe¹⁰.

The Athenians exert great vigour in the midst of their calamities.

The domestic calamities of the republic did not, however, prevent the most vigorous exertions abroad. Twenty galleys, stationed at Naupactus, watched the motions of the Peloponnesian fleet destined to the assistance of Syracuse: thirty carried on the war in Macedonia, to reduce the rebellion

9 Thucyd. p. 500, & seqq.

10 Id. *ibid.*

of Amphipolis; a considerable squadron collected tribute, and levied soldiers, in the colonies of Asia; another, still more powerful, ravaged the coast of Peloponnesus. Never did any kingdom or republic equal the magnanimity of Athens; never, in ancient or modern times, did the courage of any state entertain an ambition so far superior to its power, or exert efforts so disproportionate to its strength. Amidst the difficulties and dangers which encompassed them on every side, the Athenians persisted in the siege of Syracuse, a city little inferior to their own; and, undaunted by the actual devastation of their country, unterrified by the menaced assault of their walls, they sent, without delay, such a reinforcement into Sicily, as afforded the most promising hopes of success in their expedition against that island¹¹.

The Syracusans had scarcely time to rejoice at their victory, or Nicias to bewail his defeat, when a numerous and formidable armament appeared on the Sicilian coast. The foremost galleys, their prows adorned with gaudy streamers, pursued a secure course towards the harbours of Syracuse. The emulation of the rowers was animated by the mingled sounds of the trumpet and clarion; and the regular decoration, the elegant splendour, which distinguished every part of the equipment, exhibited a pompous spectacle of naval triumph. Their appearance, even at a distance, announced the country to which they belonged; and both the joy

The Athenian armament, commanded by Demosthenes, arrives at Syracuse. Olymp. xci. 4. A. C. 413.

¹¹ Thucyd. p. 501, & seqq.

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of the besiegers, and the terror of the besieged, acknowledged that Athens was the only city in the world capable of sending to the sea such a beautiful and magnificent contribution. The Syracusans employed not unavailing efforts to check the progress, or to hinder the approach, of the hostile armament; which, besides innumerable foreign vessels and transports, consisted of seventy-three Athenian galleys, commanded by the experienced valour of Demosthenes and Eurymedon. The pikemen on board exceeded five thousand; the light-armed troops were nearly as numerous; and, including the rowers, workmen, and attendants, the whole strength may be reckoned equal to that originally sent with Nicias¹², which amounted to above twenty thousand men.

The combined forces assault Syracuse.

The misfortunes hitherto attending the operations in Sicily had lowered the character of the general; and this circumstance, as well as the superior abilities of Demosthenes, entitled him to assume the tone of authority in their conjunct deliberations. His advice, which Eurymedon highly approved, and in which the dilatory caution of Nicias finally acquiesced, was clear and simple. "They ought to avail themselves of the alarm which the unexpected arrival of such a powerful reinforcement had spread among the enemy; and instead of submitting to the tedious formalities of a siege, at once assault the walls of Syracuse. He trusted, by the valour of his troops, to obtain, in one day,

¹² Comp. Thucyd. *supra* citat. Diodor. l. xiii. p. 336. Plut. in Nicias.

the valuable reward of long and severe labours. CHAP. XX.
But if the gods had otherwise determined, it would
be time to desist from an enterprise, in which de-
lay was equal to defeat, and to employ the bravery
of the Athenian youth in repelling the invaders of
their country¹³.”

After ravaging the banks of the Anapus, and making some ineffectual attempts against the fortifications on that side, probably with a view to divert the attention of the enemy, Demosthenes chose the first hour of a moonshine night, to proceed with the flower of the army to seize the fortresses in Epipolæ. The march was performed with successful celerity; the out-posts were surprised; the guards put to the sword; and three separate encampments, of the Syracusans, the Sicilians, and allies, formed a feeble opposition to the Athenian ardour. As if their victory had already been complete, the assailants began to pull down the wooden battlements, or to urge the pursuit with a rapidity which disordered their ranks.

Their first
operations
successful.

Meanwhile, the vigilant activity of Gylippus had assembled the whole force of Syracuse. At the approach of the enemy his vanguard retired. The Athenians were decoyed within the intricate windings of the walls, and their irregular fury was first checked by the firmness of a Theban phalanx. A resistance so sudden and unexpected might alone have been decisive; but other circumstances were adverse to the Athenians: their ignorance of the

A general
engage-
ment, in
which the
Athenians
are defeat-
ed.

¹³ Thucyd. l. vii. p. 519.

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ground, the alternate obscurity of night, and the deceitful glare of the moon, which, shining in the front of the Thebans, illumined the splendour of their arms, and multiplied the terror of their numbers. The foremost ranks of the pursuers were repelled; and, as they retreated to the main body, encountered the advancing Argives and Corcyreans, who, singing the Pœan in their Doric dialect and accent, were unfortunately taken for enemies. Fear, and then rage, seized the Athenians, who thinking themselves encompassed on all sides, determined to force their way, and committed much bloodshed among their allies, before the mistake could be discovered. To prevent the repetition of this dreadful error, their scattered bands were obliged at every moment to demand the watch-word, which was at length betrayed to their adversaries. The consequence of this was doubly fatal. At every rencounter the silent Athenians were slaughtered without mercy, while the enemy, who knew their watch-word, might at pleasure join, or decline, the battle, and easily oppress their weakness, or elude their strength. The terror and confusion increased; the rout became general; Gylippus pursued in good order with his victorious troops. The vanquished could not descend in a body with the celerity of fear, by the narrow passages through which they had mounted. Many abandoned their arms, and explored the unknown paths of the rocky Epipolé. Others threw themselves from precipices, rather than await the pursuers. Several thousands were left dead or wounded on the scene
of

of action; and in the morning the greater part of the stragglers were intercepted and cut off by the Syracusan cavalry¹⁴.

This dreadful and unexpected disaster suspended the operations of the siege. The Athenian generals spent the time in fruitless deliberations concerning their future measures, while the army lay encamped on the marshy and unhealthy banks of the Anapus. The vicissitudes of an autumnal atmosphere, corrupted by the foul vapours of an unwholesome soil, made a severe impression on the irritable fibres of men, exhausted by fatigue, dejected by disgrace, and deprived of hope. A general sickness broke out in the camp. Demosthenes urged this calamity as a new reason for hastening their departure, while it was yet possible to cross the Ionian sea, without risking the danger of a winter's tempest. But Nicias dissuaded the design of leaving Sicily until they should be warranted to take this important step by the positive authority of the republic. "Those who were actually the most bent on ignominious flight, would, after their return, be the foremost to accuse the weakness or the treachery of their commanders; and for his own part, he would rather die honourably in the field of battle, than perish by the unjust sentence of his country." Demosthenes and Eurymedon knew, by fatal experience, the irascible temper of an Athenian assembly; they only insisted, that the armament should at least remove to

The salutary measures proposed by Demosthenes prevented by Nicias.

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¹⁴ Thucyd. p. 520, & seqq.

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a more convenient station, from whence, after the troops had recovered their usual health and spirits, they might harass the enemy by continual descents, until they obtained an opportunity of fighting the Syracusan fleet on the open sea.

His motives.

But even this resolution was strenuously opposed by Nicias, who knew by the secret correspondence which he maintained with certain traitors in Syracuse, that the treasury of that city had been exhausted by the enormous expence of two thousand talents already incurred in the war, and that the magistrates had stretched their credit to its utmost limits, in borrowing from their allies; and who therefore naturally flattered himself, that the vigour of their resistance would abate with the decay of their faculties. The colleagues of Nicias were confounded with the firmness of an opposition so unlike the flexible timidity of his ordinary character, and so inconsistent with the sentiments which he had often expressed concerning the Sicilian expedition. They imagined that he might rely on some more important ground of confidence, which his caution was unwilling to explain; they submitted therefore to his opinion, an opinion equally fatal to himself and to them, and to the armament which they commanded¹⁵.

The Syracusans receive a reinforcement.

Meanwhile the prudence of Gylippus profited of the fame of his victory, to draw a powerful reinforcement from the Sicilian cities; and the transports, so long expected from Peloponnesus, finally

¹⁵ Comp. Thucyd. p. 524. & Plut. in Nicia.

arrived

arrived in the harbour of Ortygia. The Peloponnesian forces had sailed from Greece early in the spring; and it is not explained for what reason they touched on the coast of Cyrenaica. There they continued for some months, that they might defend their Grecian brethren, actually threatened by the barbarous assaults of the Lybians; and having conquered that dangerous enemy, they augmented their fleet with a few Cyrenian gallies¹⁶, and safely reached Syracuse, the place of their first destination. This Squadron formed the last assistance sent to either of the contending parties, and nothing farther was required to complete the actors in the following dreadful scene; for by the accession of the Cyrenians, Syracuse was either attacked or defended by all the various divisions of the Grecian name, which formed, in that age, the most civilized portion of the inhabitants of Asia, Africa, and Europe.

The arrival of such powerful auxiliaries to the besieged, and the increasing force of the malady, totally disconcerted the Athenians. Even Nicias agreed to set sail. Every necessary preparation was made for this purpose, and the cover of night was chosen, as most proper for concealing their own disgrace, and for eluding the vengeance of the enemy. But the night appointed for their departure was distinguished by an inauspicious eclipse of the moon, for so at least it was judged by the superstitious fears of Nicias, and by the ignorance

The Athenians prepare to raise the siege.

¹⁶ Thucyd. p. 527.

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of his diviners¹⁷, even in the vain art which they professed. The voyage was deferred till the mystical number of thrice nine days. But before the expiration of that time it was no longer practicable; for the design was soon discovered to the Syracusans, and this discovery, added to the encouragement derived from the circumstances of which we have already taken notice, increased their eagerness to attack the enemy by sea and land. Their attempts failed to destroy, by fire-ships, the Athenian fleet. They were more successful in employing superior numbers to divide the strength, and to weaken the resistance, of an enfeebled and dejected foe. During three days there was a perpetual succession of military and naval exploits. On the first day fortune hung in suspense; the second deprived the Athenians of a considerable squadron commanded by Eurymedon; and this misfortune was embittered, on the third, by the loss of eighteen galleys, with their crews¹⁸.

Their purpose opposed by the enemy;

The Syracusans celebrated their victory with triumphant enthusiasm; while their orators "extolled and magnified the glory of a city, which, by its native prowess and single danger, had not only maintained the independence of Sicily, but avenged the injuries of the whole Grecian name, too long dishonoured and afflicted by the oppressive tyranny of Athens. That tyranny had been acquired and confirmed by the usurped sovereignty of

¹⁷ The rules of divination, we are told, should have taught them, that the obscurity of an eclipse betokened a successful retreat. Plutarch. in Nicias.

¹⁸ Thucyd. p. 522, & seqq.

the sea; but even on that element, the courage of Syracuse had defeated the experience of the enemy. Their renown would be immortal, if they accomplished the useful and meritorious work; and if, by intercepting the retreat, and destroying the armament of the Athenians, they crushed at once the power, and for ever humbled the pride, of that aspiring people."

This design, suggested by the wisdom of Hermocrates, was eagerly adopted by the active zeal of his fellow-citizens, who strove, with unremitting ardour, to throw a chain of vessels across the mouth of the Great Harbour, about a mile in breadth. The labour was complete before Nicias, totally occupied by other objects, attempted to interrupt it. After repeated defeats, and although he was so miserably tormented by the stone, that he had frequently solicited his recal, that virtuous commander, whose courage rose in adversity, used the utmost diligence to retrieve the affairs of his country. The shattered galleys were speedily refitted, and again prepared, to the number of an hundred and ten, to risk the event of a battle. As they had suffered greatly, on former occasions, by the hardness and massive solidity of the Syracusan prows, Nicias provided them with grappling-irons, fitted to prevent the recoil of their opponents, and the repetition of the hostile stroke. The decks were crowded with armed men, and the contrivance to which the enemy had hitherto chiefly owed their success, of introducing the firmness and stability of a military, into a naval engagement, was adopted

in

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who throw
a chain
across the
Great
Harbour.

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in its full extent by the Athenians. When the fleet was ready for sea, Nicias recalled the troops from the various posts and fortresses still occupied by their arms, and formed them into one camp on the shore, where, on the day of battle, their ranks might be extended as widely as the vicinity of the Syracusan ramparts could safely permit; that a spacious retreat might be secured to the Athenian ships, if persecuted by their usual bad fortune; in which fatal alternative nothing remained, but to retire by land with the miserable remnant of the army. But Nicias did not yet despair, that the last efforts of his countrymen would break the enemy's chain at the mouth of the Great Harbour; and that they would return victorious, to transport their encamped companions to the friendly ports of Naxos and Catana.

Both sides
prepare
for battle.

Elevated by this hope, he forgot his bodily infirmities, and suppressed the anguish of his soul. With a cheerful and magnanimous firmness, he removed the dejection of the Athenians, exhorting them, before they embarked, by an affecting and manly speech, "to remember the vicissitudes of war, and the instability of fortune". Though hitherto unsuccessful, they had every thing to expect from the strength of their actual preparations; nor ought men, who had tried and surmounted so many dangers, to yield to the weak prejudices of unexperienced folly, and cloud the prospect of future victory, by the gloomy remembrance of past

¹⁹ Thucyd. p. 535, & seqq.

defeat.

defeat. They yet enjoyed an opportunity to defend their lives, their liberty, their friends, their country, and the mighty name of Athens; an opportunity which never could return, since the whole fortune of the republic was embarked in the present fleet." When Gylippus and the Syracusan commanders were apprised of the designs of the enemy, they hastened to the defence of the bar which had been thrown across the entrance of the harbour. It is uncertain for what reason they had left open one narrow passage²⁰, on either side of which they stationed a powerful squadron. Gylippus animated the sailors with such topics as the occasion naturally furnished, and returned to take the conduct of the land forces, leaving Siccanus, Agatharchus, and Pythen, the two first to command the wings, and the last, a citizen of Corinth, to command the centre, of the Syracusan fleet, which fell short of the Athenian by the number of twenty gallees. But the former was admirably provided with whatever seemed most necessary for attack or for defence; even the Athenian grappling-irons had not been overlooked; to elude the dangerous grasp of these instruments, the prows of the Syracusan vessels were covered with wet and slippery hides.

Before the Athenians set sail, Nicias, that nothing might be neglected to obtain success, went round the whole armament, addressing, in the most pathetic terms, the several commanders by name,

Naval engagement
in the
Great
Harbour.

²⁰ Καὶ τὸν καταλειφθέντα διεκπλεν. Thucydid. p. 451.

recalling

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recalling to them the objects most dear and most respectable, which they were engaged by every tie of honour and affection to defend, and conjuring them by their families, their friends, and their paternal gods, to exert whatever skill or courage they collectively, or as individuals, possessed, on this ever memorable and most important occasion. He then returned to the camp with an enfeebled body and an anxious mind, committing the last hope of the republic to the active valour of Demosthenes, Eudemus, and Menander. The first impression of the Athenians was irresistible; they burst through the passage of the bar, and repelled the squadrons on either side. As the entrance widened, the Syracusans, in their turn, rushed into the harbour, which was more favourable than the open sea to their mode of fighting. Thither the foremost of the Athenians returned, either compelled by superior force, or that they might assist their companions. The engagement became general in the mouth of the harbour; and in this narrow space two hundred galleys fought, during the greatest part of the day, with an obstinate and persevering valour. It would require the expressive energy of Thucydides, and the imitative, though inimitable, sounds and expressions of the Grecian tongue, to describe the noise, the tumult, and the ardour of the contending squadrons. The battle was not long confined to the shock of adverse prows, and to the distant hostility of darts and arrows. The nearest vessels grappled, and closed with each other, and their decks were soon converted

verted into a field of blood. While the heavy-armed troops boarded the enemy's ships, they left their own exposed to a similar misfortune; the fleets were divided into massive clusters of adhering gallees; and the confusion of their mingled shouts overpowered the voice of authority; the Athenians exhorting, not to abandon an element on which their republic had ever acquired victory and glory, for the dangerous protection of an hostile shore; and the Syracusans encouraging each other not to fly from an enemy, whose weakness or cowardice had long meditated flight²¹.

The singular and tremendous spectacle of an engagement more fierce and obstinate than any that had ever been beheld in the Grecian seas, restrained the activity, and totally suspended the powers, of the numerous and adverse battalions which encircled the coast. The spectators and the actors were equally interested in the important scene; but the former, the current of whose sensibility was undiverted by any exertion of mind or body, felt more deeply, and expressed more forcibly, the various emotions by which they were agitated²². Hope, fear, the shouts of victory, the shrieks of despair, the anxious solicitude of doubtful success, animated the countenances, the voice, and the gesture of the Athenians, whose whole reliance centered in their fleet. When at length their gallees evidently gave way on every side, the contrast of alternate, and the rapid tumult of successive

The Athenians defeated.

²¹ Thucyd. p. 543, & seqq.

²² Id. p. 544.

passions,

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passions, subsided in a melancholy calm. This dreadful pause of astonishment and terror was followed by the disordered trepidation of flight and fear: many escaped to the camp: others ran, uncertain whither to direct their steps; while Nicias, with a small, but undismayed band, remained on the shore, to protect the landing of their unfortunate gallees. But the retreat of the Athenians could not probably have been effected, had it not been favoured by the actual circumstances of the enemy, as well as by the peculiar prejudices of ancient superstition. In this well-fought battle, the vanquished had lost fifty, and the victors forty vessels. It was incumbent on the latter to employ their immediate and most strenuous efforts to recover the dead bodies of their friends, that they might be honoured with the sacred and indispensable rites of funeral. The day was far spent; the strength of the sailors had been exhausted by a long continuance of unremitting labour; and both they and their companions on shore were more desirous to return to Syracuse to enjoy the fruits of victory, than to irritate the dangerous despair of the vanquished Athenians²³.

Their extreme despondency.

It is observed by the Roman orator²⁴, with no less truth than elegance, that not only the navy of Athens, but the glory and the empire of that republic, suffered shipwreck in the fatal harbour of Syracuse. The despondent degeneracy which immediately followed this ever memorable engagement was testi-

²³ Thucyd. p. 545.

²⁴ Cic. in Verr. v. 37.

fied in the neglect of a duty which the Athenians had never neglected before, and in denying a part of their national character, which it had hitherto been their greatest glory to maintain. They abandoned to insult and indignity the bodies of the slain; and when it was proposed to them by their commanders to prepare next day for a second engagement, since their vessels were still more numerous than those of the enemy, they, who had seldom avoided a superior, and who had never declined the encounter of an equal force, declared, that no motive could induce them to withstand the weaker armament of Syracuse. Their only desire was to escape by land, under cover of the night, from a foe whom they had not courage to oppose, and from a place where every object was offensive to their sight, and most painful to their reflection²⁵.

The behaviour of the Syracusans might have proved extremely favourable to this design. The evening after the battle was the vigil of the feast of Hercules; and the still agitated combatants awakened, after a short and feverish repose, to celebrate the memory of their favourite hero, to whose propitious influence they probably ascribed the merit of the most splendid trophy that ever adorned the fame of Syracuse. From the triumph of victory, and grateful emotions of religious enthusiasm, there was an easy transition, in the creed and in the practice of the Greeks, to the extravagance of licentious joy, and the excesses of sensual indulgence.

The Syracusans celebrate the festival of Hercules with licentious joy.

²⁵ Thucyd. p. 545.

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Sports, processions, music, dancing, the pleasures of the table, of the elegant arts, and of unguarded conversation, were incorporated in the texture of their religious worship. But the coincidence of a festival and a victory demanded an accumulated profusion of such objects as sooth the senses and please the fancy. Amidst these giddy transports, the Syracusans lost all remembrance of an enemy whom they despised; even the soldiers on guard joined the dissolute or frivolous amusements of their companions; and, during the greatest part of the night, Syracuse presented a mixed scene of secure gaiety, of thoughtless jollity, and of mad and dangerous disorder²⁶.

Stratagem
of Hermo-
crates to
prevent
the Athe-
nian re-
treat.

The firm and vigilant mind of Hermocrates alone withstood, but was unable to divert, the general current. It was impossible to rouse to the fatigues of war men buried in wine and pleasure, and intoxicated with victory; and, as he could not intercept by force, he determined to retard by stratagem, the intended retreat of the Athenians, whose numbers and resentment would still render them formidable to whatever part of Sicily they might remove their camp. A select band of horsemen, assuming the character of traitors, fearlessly approached the hostile ramparts, and warned the Athenians of the danger of departing that night, as many ambuscades lurked in the way, and all the most important passes were occupied by the enemy. The frequency of treason gained credit to the per-

²⁶ Thucyd. p. 546.

fidious advice; and the Athenians, having changed their first resolution, were persuaded by Nicias to wait two days longer, that such measures might be taken as seemed best adapted to promote the safety and celerity of their march²⁷.

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The camp was raised on the third morning after the battle. Forty thousand men, of whom many were afflicted with wounds and disease, and all exhausted by fatigue, and dejected by calamity, exhibited the appearance, not of a flying army, but of a great and populous community, driven from their ancient habitations by the cruel vengeance of a conqueror. They had miserably fallen from the lofty expectations with which they sailed in triumph to the harbour of Syracuse. They had abandoned their fleet, their transports, the hopes of victory, and the glory of the Athenian name; and these collective sufferings were enhanced and exasperated by the painful images which struck the eyes and the fancy of each unfortunate individual. The mangled bodies of their companions and friends, deprived of the sacred rites of funeral, affected them with a sentiment of religious horror, on which the weakness of human nature is happily unable to dwell. They removed their attention from this dreadful sight; but they could not divert their compassion from a spectacle still more melancholy, the numerous crowds of sick and wounded, who followed them with enfeebled and unequal steps, intreating, in the accent and attitude of unutterable

The Athenians raise their camp.

Their dreadful afflictions;

²⁷ Thucyd. p. 547.

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anguish, to be delivered from the horrors of famine, or the rage of an exasperated foe. Amidst such affecting scenes, the heart of a stranger would have melted with tender sympathy; but how much more must it have afflicted the Athenians, to see their parents, brothers, children, and friends, involved in unexampled misery! to hear, without the possibility of relieving, their lamentable complaints! and reluctantly to throw the clinging victims from their wearied necks and arms! Yet the care of personal safety prevailed over every other care; for the soldiers, either destitute of slaves, or distrusting their fidelity, were not only encumbered by their armour, but oppressed by the weight of their provisions²⁸.

Melan-
choly firm-
ness of
Nicias.

The superior rank of Nicias entitled him to a pre-eminence of toil and of woe; and he deserves the regard of posterity by his character and sufferings, and still more by the melancholy firmness of his conduct. The load of accumulated disasters did not sink him into inactive despondency. He moved with a rapid pace around every part of the army, and the ardour of his mind re-animating the languor of his debilitated frame, he exclaimed, with a loud and distinct voice, "Athenians and allies! there is yet room for hope. Many have escaped from still greater evils; nor ought you rashly to accuse either fortune or yourselves. As to me, who, in bodily strength, excel not the weakest among you (for you see to what a miserable condition my disease has reduced me), and

²⁸ Thucyd. p. 548.

who,

who, in the happiness of private life, and the deceitful gifts of prosperity, had long been distinguished above the most illustrious of my contemporaries, I am now confounded in affliction with the meanest and most worthless. Yet am I unconscious of deserving such a fatal reverse of fortune. My conduct towards men has been irreproachable; my piety towards the gods conspicuous and sincere. For this reason I am still animated with confidence; calamities, unmerited by guilt, are disarmed of their terrors. If we have incurred the indignation of the gods by our ambitious designs against Sicily, our offence, surely, is sufficiently expiated by past sufferings, which now render us the objects of compassion. Other nations have attacked their neighbours with less provocation, and have yet escaped with a gentler punishment; nor will experience warrant the belief, that for the frailties and errors of passion, providence should impose penalties too heavy to be borne. We have the less reason to adopt an impious prejudice, so dishonourable to the gods, when we consider the means which their goodness has still left us to provide for our defence. Our numbers, our resolution, and even our misfortunes, still render us formidable. There is not any army in Sicily capable to intercept our course; much less to expel us from the first friendly territory in which we may fix our camp. If we can secure, therefore, our present safety, by a prudent, speedy, and courageous retreat, we may afterwards retrieve our lost honour, and restore the fallen glory of Athens;

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since the chief ornament of a state consists in brave and virtuous men, not in empty ships and undefended walls ²⁹."

The retreat of the Athenians.

The actions of Nicias fully corresponded with his words. He neglected none of the duties of a great general. Instead of leading the army towards Naxos and Catana, in which direction there was reason to apprehend many secret ambushes of the enemy, he conducted them by the western route towards Gela and Camerina; expecting, by this measure, to find provisions in greater plenty, as well as to elude the latent snares of the Syracusans. That nothing might be omitted which promised the hope of relief, messengers were immediately dispatched to the neighbouring cities, which might possibly be tempted by their natural jealousy of the growing prosperity of Syracuse, to favour the retreat of the vanquished. The troops were then divided into two squares, as the most secure and capacious arrangement. Nicias led the van; Demosthenes conducted the rear; the baggage, and unarmed multitude, occupied the centre. In this order of march they passed the river Anapus, the ford of which was feebly disputed by an inconsiderable guard; and having proceeded the first day only five miles, they encamped in the evening on a rising ground, after being much harassed during the latter part of their journey by the Syracusan cavalry and archers, who galled them at a distance, intercepted the stragglers, and avoided, by a seasonable retreat, to commit the security of their own

²⁹ Thucyd. p. 550.

fortune with the dangerous despair of the Athenians. Next day, having marched only twenty furlongs, they reached a spacious plain, the convenience of which invited them to repose; especially as they needed a supply of water and provisions, which might be easily obtained from the surrounding country³⁰.

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Before this time, the enemy were apprised of their line of march; and, in order to interrupt it, they sent a numerous detachment to fortify the mountain of Acræum. This mountain, which probably gave name to the small town situate in its neighbourhood, intersected the direct road to Gela and Camerina. It was distant a few miles from the Athenian encampment, and a small degree of art might render it impregnable, since it was of a steep and rapid ascent, and encompassed on every side by the rocky channel of a loud and foaming torrent. In vain the Athenians attempted, on three successive days, to force the passage. They were repelled with loss in every new attack, which became more feeble than the preceding. In the first and most desperate, an accidental storm of thunder increased the courage of the Syracusans and the terror of the Athenians. A similar event had, in the first engagement after the invasion of Sicily, produced an opposite effect on the contending nations. But the hopes and the fears of men change with their fortune.

Interrupted by the enemy.

In the evening after the last unsuccessful contest, the condition of the Athenians was peculiarly de-

Change their line of march.

³⁰ Thucyd. p. 552, & seqq.

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plorable. The numbers of the wounded had been increased by the fruitless attempts to pass the mountain; the enemy had continually galled and insulted them as they retreated to their camp; the adjacent territory could no longer supply them with the necessaries of life; and they must be compelled, after all their hardships and fatigues, to make a long circuit by the sea-shore, if they expected to reach, in safety, the places of their respective destination. Even this resolution (for there was no alternative), however dreadful to men in their comfortless and exhausted state, was recommended by Nicias, who, to conceal his design from the enemy, caused innumerable fires to be lighted in every part of the camp³¹. The troops then marched out under cover of the night, and in the same order which they had hitherto observed. But they had not proceeded far in this nocturnal expedition, when the obscurity of the skies, the deceitful tracks of an unknown and hostile country, filled the most timid or unfortunate with imaginary terrors. Their panic, as is usual in great bodies of men, was speedily communicated to those around them; and Demosthenes, with above one half of his division, fatally mistook the road, and quitted, never more to rejoin, the rest of the army.

The division commanded by Demosthenes surrenders to Gylippus.

The scouts of Gylippus and the Syracusans immediately brought intelligence of this important event, which furnished an opportunity to attack the divided strength of the Athenians. His superior knowledge of the country enabled Gylippus,

³¹ Thucyd. p. 552, & seqq.

by the celerity of his march, to intercept the smaller division, and to surround them on every side, in the difficult and intricate defiles which led to the ford of the river Erinios. There he assaulted them with impunity, during a whole day, with darts, arrows, and javelins. When the measure of their sufferings was complete, he proclaimed towards the evening, by the sound of the trumpet, and with the loud voice of the herald, freedom, forgiveness, and protection to all who should desert and abandon the bad fortune of their leaders; an offer which was accepted by the troops of several Asiatic islands, and other dependent and tributary countries. At length he entered into treaty with Demosthenes himself, whose soldiers laid down their arms, and delivered their money (which filled the capacious hollow of four broad bucklers), on condition that they should not suffer death, imprisonment, or famine³². Notwithstanding the number of the deserters and of the slain, the remainder still amounted to six thousand, who were sent to Syracuse with their captive general, under a powerful and vigilant escort, while the activity of Gylippus followed the flying battalions of the enemy, which had been conducted by Nicias to the distance of twenty miles, towards the fatal banks of the river Assinaros.

The Syracusans overtook the rear before the van could arrive at the lofty and abrupt margin of this rapid stream; and an herald was sent to Nicias,

The division under Nicias overtaken by the enemy.

³² Thucyd. p. 553.

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exhorting him to imitate the example of his colleague, and to surrender, without farther bloodshed, to the irresistible valour of his victorious pursuers. Nicias disbelieved, or affected to disbelieve, the report; but when a confidential messenger, whom he was allowed to dispatch for information, brought certain intelligence of the surrender and disgrace of Demosthenes, he also condescended to propose terms, in the name of the Athenians, engaging, on the immediate cessation of hostilities, to reimburse the magistrates of Syracuse for the expence of the war, and to deliver Athenian hostages (a citizen for a talent) until the debt should be liquidated ³³.

Their melancholy
defence.

These terms were rejected by the Syracusans with disdain; and Gylippus having occupied the most advantageous posts on every side, attacked the army of Nicias with the same mode of warfare which had, two days before, proved so destructive to their unfortunate companions. During the whole day they bore, with extraordinary patience, the hostile assault, still expecting, under cover of the night, to escape the cruel vigilance of the enemy. But that hope was vain: Gylippus perceived their departure; and although three hundred men of determined courage gallantly broke through the guards, and effected their escape, the rest were no sooner discovered than they returned to their former station, and laid down their arms in silent despair. Yet the return of the morning brought back their courage. They again took up their arms, and marched towards

³³ Thucyd. p. 554.

the river, miserably galled and afflicted by the hostile archers and cavalry. Their distress was most lamentable and incurable: yet hope did not totally forsake them; for like men in the oppression and languor of a consuming disease, they still entertained a confused idea, that their sufferings would end, could they but reach the opposite banks of the neighbouring river³⁴.

The desire of assuaging their thirst encouraged this daring design. They rushed with frantic disorder into the rapidity of the stream; the pursuing Syracusans, who had occupied the rocky banks, destroying them with innumerable volleys of missile weapons. In the Assinaros they had a new enemy to contend with. The depth and force of the waters triumphed over their single, and shook their implicated strength. Many were borne down the stream. At length the weight of their numbers resisted the violence of the torrent; but a new form of danger and of horror presented itself to the eyes of Nicias. His soldiers turned their fury against each other, disputing, with the point of the sword, the unwholesome draughts of the agitated and turbid current. This spectacle melted the firmness of his manly soul. He surrendered to Gylippus, and asked quarter for the miserable remnant of his troops, who had not perished in the Assinaros, or been destroyed by the Syracusan archers and cavalry³⁵. Before the commands of the Lacedæmonian general could pervade the army, many of the soldiers had, according to the barba-

Horrid
scene on
the banks
of the Af-
finaros.

³⁴ Thucyd. p. 554.

³⁵ Ibid. p. 555.

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rous practice of the age, seized their prisoners and slaves; so that the Athenian captives were afterwards distributed among several communities of Sicily, which had sent assistance to Syracuse. The rest, upon laying down their arms, were entitled to the pity and protection of Gylippus; who, after sending proper detachments to intercept and collect the stragglers, returned in triumph to the city with the inestimable trophies of his valour and conduct.

Death of
the Athe-
nian gene-
rals.

Cruel
treatment
of the
captives.

Nicias had little to expect from the *humanity* of a proud and victorious Spartan; but Demosthenes might naturally flatter himself with the hope of *justice*. He urged with energy, but urged in vain, the observance of the capitulation which had been ratified with due forms, on the faith of which he had surrendered himself and the troops entrusted to his command. The public prisoners, conducted successively to Syracuse, and exceeding together the number of seven thousand, were treated with the same inhuman cruelty. They were universally condemned to labour in the mines and quarries of Sicily³⁶: their whole sustenance was bread and water: they suffered alternately the ardours of a scorching sun, and the chilling damps of autumn. For seventy days and nights they languished in this dreadful captivity, during which, the diseases incident to their manner of life were rendered infectious by the stench of the dead bodies, which corrupted the purity of the surrounding air. At length an eternal separation was made between

³⁶ Thucyd. p. 556.

those who should enjoy the happier lot of being sold as slaves into distant lands, and those who should for ever be confined to their terrible dungeons. The Athenians, with such Italians and Sicilians as had unnaturally embraced their cause, were reserved for the latter doom. Their generals, Nicias and Demosthenes, had not lived to behold this melancholy hour. Gylippus would have spared their lives, not from any motives of humanity and esteem, but that his joyous return to Sparta might have been graced by their presence. But the resentment of the Syracusans, the fears of the Corinthians; above all, the suspicious jealousy of those perfidious traitors who had maintained a secret correspondence with Nicias, which they dreaded lest the accidents of his future life might discover, loudly demanded the immediate execution of the captive generals³⁷. The Athenians of those times justly regretted the loss of Demosthenes, a gallant and enterprising commander; but posterity will for ever lament the fate of Nicias, the most pious, the most virtuous, and the most unfortunate man of the age in which he lived.

Amidst this dark and dreadful scene of cruelty and revenge, we must not omit to mention one singular example of humanity, which broke forth like a meteor in the gloom of a nocturnal tempest. The Syracusans, who could punish their helpless captives with such unrelenting severity, had often melted into tears at the affecting strains of Euripides³⁸, an Athenian poet, who had learned in the Socratic

A singular exception to this general cruelty.

³⁷ Thucyd. l. vii. ad fin.

³⁸ See above, p. 140.

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school to adorn the lessons of philosophy with the charms of fancy, and who was regarded by the taste of his contemporaries, as he still is by many enlightened judges, as the most tender and pathetic, the most philosophical and instructive, of all tragic writers. The pleasure which the Syracusans had derived from his inimitable poetry, made them long to hear it rehearsed by the flexible voices and harmonious pronunciation of the Athenians, so unlike, and so superior, to the rudeness and asperity of their own Doric dialect. They desired their captives to repeat the plaintive scenes of their favourite bard. The captives obeyed; and affecting to represent the woes of ancient kings and heroes, they too faithfully expressed their own. Their taste and sensibility endeared them to the Syracusans, who released their bonds, received them with kindness into their families³⁹, and, after treating them with all the honourable distinctions of ancient hospitality, restored them to their longing and afflicted country, as a small but precious wreck of the most formidable armament that had ever sailed from a Grecian harbour. At their return to Athens, the grateful captives walked in solemn procession to the house of Euripides, whom they hailed as their deliverer from slavery and death⁴⁰. This acknowledgment, infinitely more honourable than

³⁹ *ἢ τοὶ τεθνήκεν ἢ διδάσκει γραμμάτων*, “ he is either dead or teaching verses ;” an expression first introduced at this time, was afterwards applied proverbially, in speaking of travellers in foreign countries, whose fate was uncertain.

⁴⁰ Plutarch, in Nicias.

all the crowns and splendour that ever furrounded the person, and even than all the altars and temples that ever adorned the memory of a poet ⁴¹, must have transported Euripides with the *second* triumph which the heart of man can feel. He would have enjoyed the *first*, if his countrymen had owed to his virtues the tribute which they paid to his talents; and if, instead of the beauty and elegance of his verses, they had been saved by his probity, his courage, or his patriotifm; qualities which, ftill more than genius and fancy, constitute the real excellence and dignity of human nature.

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⁴¹ See above, Chapter VI.







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